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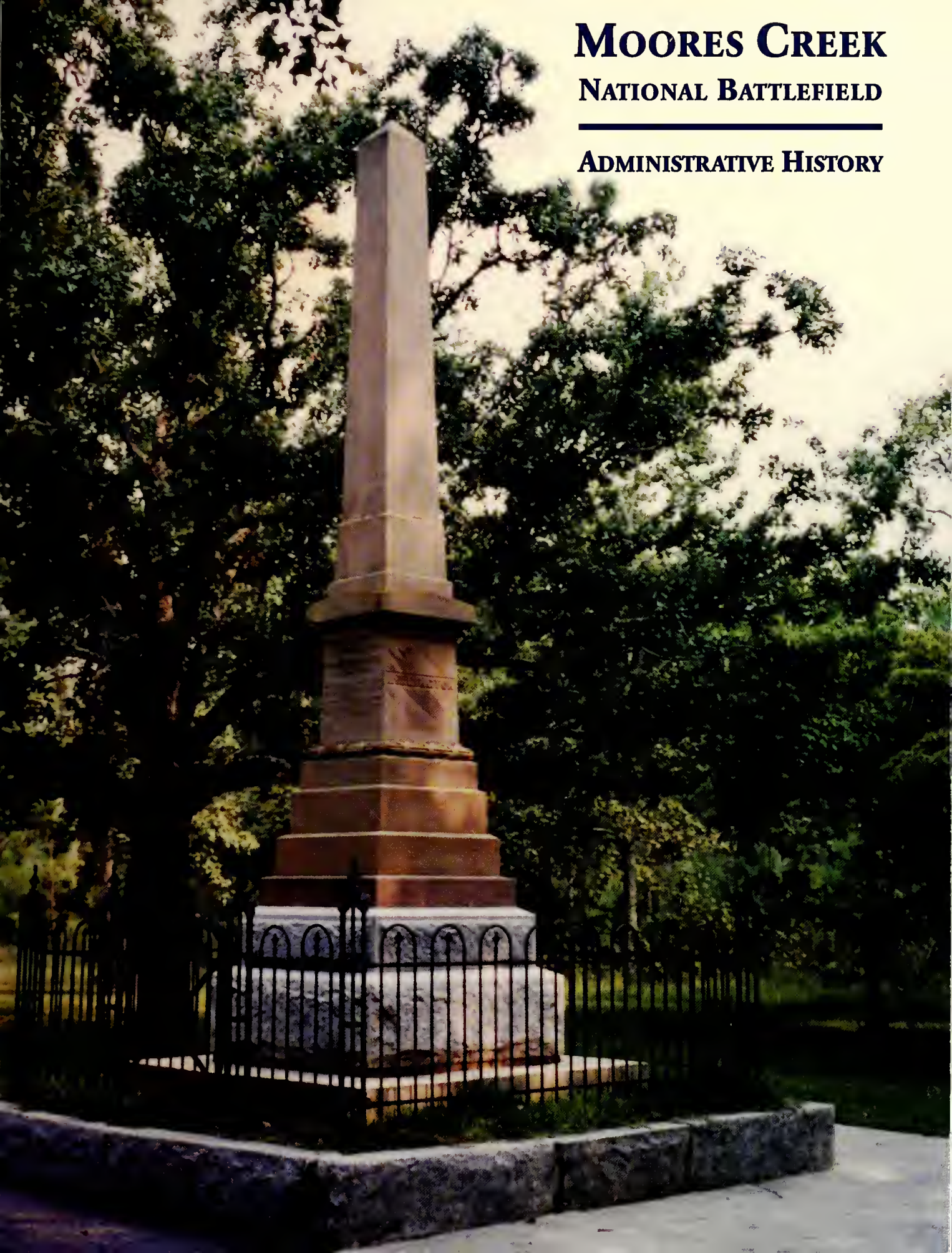
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MOORES CREEK

NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD

ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY





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MOORES CREEK NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD

AN ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY

June 1999

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Southeast Regional Office
National Park Service
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Atlanta, Georgia

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Foreword

We are pleased to make available this administrative history, part of our ongoing effort to provide a comprehensive account of the development of each National Park Service unit in the Southeast Region. The original draft of this report was researched and written in 1994 by Michael Capps, then a historian in the Southeast Regional Office. The draft was revised and updated in 1998 by Steven Davis, historian with Cultural Resources Stewardship, Southeast Regional Office. Project supervision was provided by John Barrett, chief of planning and compliance for Cultural Resources Stewardship. Many other individuals and institutions contributed to the completion of this work. We would particularly like to thank Moores Creek National Battlefield Superintendent Ann Childress, former Superintendents John Stockert and Robert Davidson, Administrative Officer Hattie Squires, National Park Service Bureau Historian Barry Mackintosh, and Professor Lary Dilsaver of the University of South Alabama for their assistance. We hope that this administrative history will prove valuable to park managers and others in understanding the past development of Moores Creek National Battlefield and in planning future activities.

Kirk A. Cordell

Chief, Cultural Resources Stewardship

Southeast Regional Office

June 1999

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INTRODUCTION

On the morning of February 27, 1776, Patriot militia at Moores Creek Bridge defeated a Loyalist army marching to rendezvous with a British force on the North Carolina coast. This early Patriot victory during the American Revolution helped delay a full-scale British invasion of the southern colonies for several years. Commemorative efforts at the site of this battle began in 1856 with the drive to erect a monument. Forty years later, the property was preserved as a historical site by the state through the Moores Creek Monumental Association, a private organization. The federal government took over the site as a national park operated by the War Department in 1926; the National Park Service began managing the battlefield in 1933. For over a century, Moores Creek National Battlefield has evolved as a historical site preserving and interpreting the 1776 battle. Major themes in the battlefield's management history include the upgrading of facilities as visitation increased, the gradual transition of the site from a commemorative park to a historical landscape, and the change in emphasis from recreational to educational use.

Today, the National Park Service continues to manage Moores Creek National Battlefield as a historical site, encompassing 87.75 acres in rural Pender County, North Carolina. An average of sixty-two thousand people visit the battlefield each year to learn about the Battle of Moores Creek Bridge and life in colonial North Carolina. In order to preserve and interpret that history, the National Park Service maintains a visitor center and museum, two interpretive trails, a reconstructed bridge, traces of a historic causeway and earthworks, six monuments, and nine archeological features. Efforts are underway to restore the battlefield landscape to its 1776 appearance.

This administrative history traces the development and management of Moores Creek National Battlefield from the time of the 1776 battle to the present, especially the years of National Park Service administration. Chapter One provides background on the Battle of Moores Creek Bridge and its significance. Chapter Two details the creation and management of the historical site at the battleground prior to the 1933 transfer of the property to the National Park Service. Chapter Three chronicles the planning and physical development of Moores Creek National Battlefield between 1933 and the present. Chapter Four covers visitor services, especially the park's interpretation of the site to the public. Chapter Five looks at the park's efforts to preserve and protect its resources and includes sections on cultural resources, natural resources, and law enforcement. The five appendices provide a chronology for Moores Creek National Battlefield, a list of superintendents, annual visitation statistics, a list of relevant state legislation, and copies of relevant federal legislation. Lastly, a bibliography and an index are included.

CHAPTER ONE

THE BATTLE OF MOORES CREEK BRIDGE

EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT OF NORTH CAROLINA

After numerous failed attempts by Europeans to colonize North Carolina in the first half of the seventeenth century, English settlers moving south from Virginia finally established a firm foothold during the 1650s. Settlement of the Lower Cape Fear region began with Brunswick in 1727 and Wilmington in 1740. Originally part of one colony with South Carolina, North Carolina became a separate royal colony in 1729. By 1775, its population was estimated to be 265,000 whites and 80,000 blacks, mostly slaves. During this period, Scotch Irish, German, Scottish Highlander, Welsh, and English settlers began moving from the coastal areas to the interior of the colony.¹

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION COMES TO NORTH CAROLINA

As the economic and political controversy between King George III of Great Britain and the thirteen British colonies in North America gave way to open rebellion, North Carolina became a colony of divided loyalties. The royal assembly, which was popularly elected, opposed Royal Governor Josiah Martin. Yet many people could not bring themselves to actually fight against the mother country. North Carolinians were generally split among three groups—those who remained loyal to King George and Great Britain, those who supported rebellion, and those who stayed out of the controversy altogether. King George's supporters were known as Loyalists or Tories and included many Scottish Highlanders. Called Patriots, Whigs, or Rebels, supporters of independence from Great Britain were increasingly prepared to act by the mid-1770s.²

Tensions between Martin and the royal assembly boiled over in 1774 when the governor refused to call the assembly into session. In response, mass meetings were held and a provincial assembly was established independent of the governor. During its 1774 and 1775 sessions, this provincial assembly elected delegates to the two Continental Congresses and generally supported the growing sentiments of rebellion. By June 1775, Martin had dismissed the royal assembly, unsuccessfully sought British troops, and abandoned North Carolina's colonial capital of New Bern. After a brief stay at Fort Johnson on the Cape Fear River, he went into exile on a British naval vessel off the coast.³

THE FIRST BRITISH CAMPAIGN TO SECURE THE SOUTHERN COLONIES

Though in exile off the coast of North Carolina, Martin lobbied British authorities for support in regaining control of the colony. His lobbying paid off. After initial battles at Lexington, Concord, and Bunker Hill, British commanders were preparing for a major offensive in the northern colonies. However, they believed that a quick campaign in the Carolinas prior to such an offensive could rally Loyalists and subdue the rebellion in the southern colonies. The campaign plan called for British troops from New York under Sir Henry Clinton to rendezvous off the North Carolina coast with additional forces under Lord Charles Cornwallis sailing from Cork, Ireland, under the protection of Sir Peter Parker's fleet. In the meantime, a Loyalist army from the interior of the colony would march to meet the British forces off the coast by late February 1776. The combined force would then regain control of North Carolina before heading to the primary target of Charleston, South Carolina.⁴

Martin's planned Loyalist militia mobilized as a force of sixteen hundred Scottish Highlanders at the settlement of Cross Creek in the interior of North Carolina. Commanded by Brigadier General Donald MacDonald and Lieutenant Colonel Donald McLeod, the Loyalist militia began the march to the coast on February 18, 1776, with only five hundred muskets. The Loyalists planned to advance along the southwest side of the Cape Fear River to the coast, link up with the British troops arriving by sea, and retake the colony. In the meantime, the Patriots had established several militia groups, while the Continental Congress had authorized two regiments of the Continental Line. Colonel Richard Caswell of the militia and Colonel James Moore of the First North Carolina Continentals planned to intercept the Loyalists before they reached the coast. On February 25, a force of 150 Wilmington militiamen under Colonel Alexander Lillington arrived at the bridge where

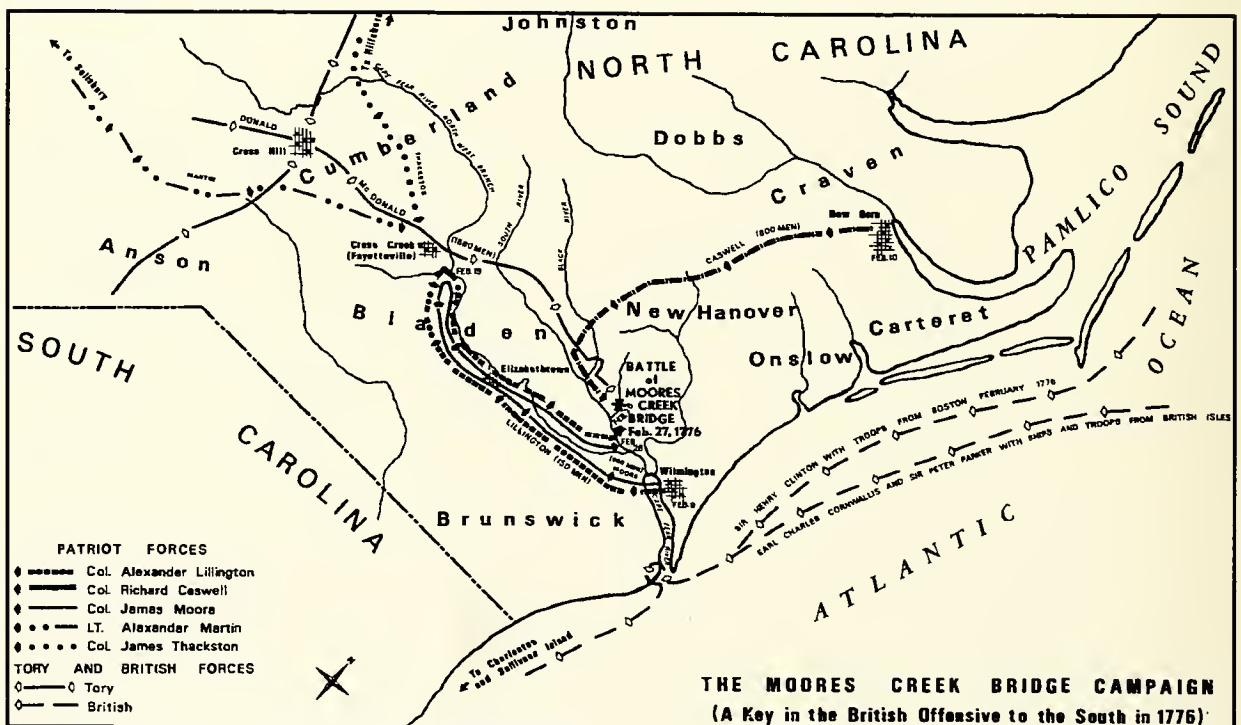


Figure 1. A map of the Moore's Creek campaign, February 1776



Figure 2. Bill Ballard's drawing of the decisive moment during the Battle of Moores Creek Bridge

the Negro Head Point Road crossed Widow Moore's Creek, a creek named after an early settler in the area and subsequently known as Moores Creek. Beating the Loyalists to the bridge, Lillington established earthworks on the east side of the creek. Caswell arrived at Moores Creek Bridge on the following day with an additional eight hundred militiamen and established earthworks on the west side of the creek. After learning of the Patriot force at Moores Creek Bridge, the Loyalists prepared for battle.⁵

THE BATTLE OF MOORES CREEK BRIDGE

The Loyalists began a six-mile march to Moores Creek Bridge at one o'clock on the morning of February 27. Just before dawn, they discovered abandoned earthworks on the west side of the creek—Caswell had moved his militiamen to Lillington's earthworks on the east side. In addition, the Patriots had removed planks from the bridge and greased the stringers. McLeod decided to send Captain John Campbell's Scottish Highlanders on a broadsword charge across the remains of the bridge. To the sounds of bagpipes, drums, and the cry "King George and broad swords," the Highlanders reached the other side of the creek. Concealed behind Lillington's earthworks with two cannon, known as "Old Mother Covington and her daughter," the Patriots opened fire on the Highlanders with deadly consequences. The charge quickly fell apart as Loyalists began retreating in panic, some drowning in Moores Creek. Around thirty Loyalists were killed and forty were wounded during the brief engagement. Far more damaging to Great Britain's southern plan was the capture of 850 Loyalists in the days following the battle. The lopsided Patriot victory came with only two militiamen wounded, including the mortally wounded John Grady.⁶

THE AFTERMATH AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BATTLE

Although the Loyalist militia was effectively routed at Moores Creek Bridge, the British naval and land forces commanded by Clinton, Parker, and Cornwallis rendezvoused off the North Carolina coast between March and May 1776. Leaving the colony to the Patriots, the British fleet attempted to capture Charleston but withdrew to the colony of New York after being turned back by Patriot militia on Sullivan's Island at the entrance to the city's harbor. The British failure to secure the Carolinas in 1776 left the southern colonies under Patriot control for several years. During this time, peace in the region was interrupted by the 1776-1777 Cherokee War, the 1778 British capture of Savannah in Georgia, and the unsuccessful 1779 attempt by Patriot and French forces to retake Savannah. However, it was not until 1780 that Great Britain would mount a full-scale campaign to subdue the southern colonies. Beginning with the successful siege of Charleston, this campaign ultimately led to the 1781 British surrender at Yorktown, following major battles at Camden, Kings Mountain, Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse, and Eutaw Springs.⁷

Though the Battle of Moores Creek Bridge was a relatively minor engagement, it influenced the course of the American Revolution in significant ways. The Patriot victories at Moores Creek Bridge and Sullivan's Island ended British hopes of easily quelling the rebellion in the southern colonies. In North Carolina, the battle strengthened the Patriot position by reducing organized Loyalist opposition. Perhaps most important, this early victory provided a needed boost to Patriot morale. The battle was to the southern colonies what Lexington had been for the northern colonies. Emboldened by the victory at Moores Creek Bridge, North Carolina's provincial assembly approved the Halifax Resolve, which instructed the colony's delegates to the Continental Congress to vote for independence from Great Britain.⁸

THE LEGEND OF MARY SLOCUMB'S RIDE

Strongly associated with the Battle of Moores Creek Bridge is the legend of Mary Slocumb's ride. According to this story, Mary dreamed that Ezekiel, her Patriot husband, had been wounded in a battle. After awaking, she rode a horse for sixty miles at night to arrive as the Battle of Moores Creek Bridge was ending. Mary discovered that Ezekiel was safe and nursed wounded Patriots before returning to her home the following night. The legend was apparently first recorded by Elizabeth Ellet in her 1848 *Women of the American Revolution* and her 1850 *Domestic History of the American Revolution*. John H. Wheeler included the tale in his 1851 *Historical Sketches of North Carolina from 1584 to 1851*. Although Mary and Ezekiel Slocumb were actual persons, the specific events of the legend have since been discredited.⁹

NOTES

¹ Russell A. Gibbs, *A History of Moores Creek National Military Park* (National Park Service, 1965), 5.

² Charles E. Hatch, Jr., *The Battle of Moores Creek Bridge* (Washington: National Park Service, 1969), 1-11.

³ Ibid.

⁴ John Buchanan, *The Road to Guilford Courthouse: The American Revolution in the Carolinas* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1997), 3-4; Hatch, 11-15.

⁵ Hatch, 15-37; Elizabeth F. McKoy, *Early New Hanover County Records* (Wilmington, North Carolina: Elizabeth F. McKoy, 1973), 50-54.

⁶ Hatch, 37-47; Buchanan, 4-5.

⁷ Buchanan, 3-383.

⁸ Hatch, 47-50, 60-61.

⁹ S. Michael Hubbell, *Mary Slocumb's Ride to the Battle of Moore's Creek Bridge* (National Park Service, 1962), 1-28.

CHAPTER TWO

PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE MOORES CREEK BATTLEGROUND PRIOR TO NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CONTROL

POST-BATTLE PERIOD, 1776-1897

Despite the significance of the Battle of Moores Creek Bridge, the battleground was virtually forgotten after the Revolutionary War. In 1791, the land was granted by patent to John Jones, the first private owner of the site. The battleground's importance remained unrecognized until the *Fayetteville Observer* printed an article deploring the site's neglect in 1856. Inspired by this article, a group of citizens from several New Hanover County communities met at Long Creek on February 9, 1856, and planned a picnic for the eightieth anniversary of the battle. On February 27, fifteen hundred people attended the celebration at the battleground.¹

On January 10, 1857, another group met in Wilmington and appointed committees from New Hanover, Duplin, Lenoir, Wayne, Cumberland, Bladen, Columbus, and Brunswick Counties to solicit funds for a monument to Grady and the other Patriots who fought at the Battle of Moores Creek Bridge. The Patriot Monument, or Grady Monument, was initiated with the laying of a cornerstone during the second anniversary celebration on February 27. Interest in these commemorative efforts declined in subsequent years; the next celebration was not held until 1876 during the Revolutionary War centennial.²

THE MOORES CREEK MONUMENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1897-1926

Although commemorative efforts at the Moores Creek battleground had begun in the 1850s, four decades passed before the site became a public park. In 1897, the State of North Carolina acquired two tracts of land that totaled ten acres and included the traces of Lillington's earthworks on the east side of Moores Creek. Since the state was not prepared to administer the battleground, the Moores Creek Monumental Association (MCMA) was chartered in March 1899 as a private organization of Pender County residents funded in part by state appropriations.³ Sponsored by Gibson James, a local representative in the North Carolina General Assembly, the act to create the



Figure 3. A gathering of the MCMA in front of the Heroic Women Monument, circa 1910

MCMA authorized the organization to improve the battleground, protect the site, and “do such other things as tend to inspire among our people state and national pride and a higher appreciation of patriotic manhood.”⁴

The efforts of the state and the MCMA were part of a larger atmosphere of patriotism throughout the nation in the late nineteenth century. The centennial of the Revolutionary War during the 1870s and 1880s fueled this sentiment. In addition to numerous private efforts to mark this event through celebrations and the erection of memorials, the U.S. Congress commissioned a study of Revolutionary War battlefields and provided funds for eight battle monuments. In the South, patriotism was heightened by the Lost Cause, the commemoration by white southerners of the Confederate effort during the Civil War.⁵

Within the context of patriotic commemoration, the MCMA was inspired by the efforts of the Guilford Battle Ground Company in the state's piedmont region. This private company was chartered in 1887 to acquire and preserve part of the Guilford Courthouse battleground as a public park. Rather than attempt a restoration of the battleground as a historical site, the Guilford Battle Ground Company created a commemorative park for recreational use by the residents of nearby Greensboro. This park eventually included numerous monuments, ornamental plantings, an artificial lake, a restaurant, and other visitor facilities. The company's development and use of the Guilford Courthouse battleground were virtually duplicated by the MCMA on a smaller scale in eastern North Carolina.⁶

At its first meeting on July 4, 1899, the MCMA elected officers and a board of directors, including James F. Moore as president. More importantly, the association set the tone for its development and use of the Moores Creek battleground. The MCMA resolved to hold a celebration at the site the following month and authorized the initial development of the park as a commemorative and recreational area. The inaugural celebration attracted five thousand people to the battleground, and subsequent celebrations of the battle's anniversary became the primary use of the park during its management by the MCMA. The site was developed accordingly with recreational facilities for the celebrations and picnics. After a residence was built at the battleground in 1907, the association hired a caretaker to maintain and protect the site.⁷

Funding for the MCMA's activities came primarily from annual state appropriations and concession fees at the annual celebrations. Between 1900 and 1913, North Carolina senators and congressmen introduced a total of seventeen bills in the U.S. Congress authorizing federal appropriations for work at the battleground. However, none of these efforts were successful. The association did not raise funds for battleground improvements or activities beyond the state appropriations and concession fees. Due to limited funds available, the association did not hold the annual celebrations during some years.⁸

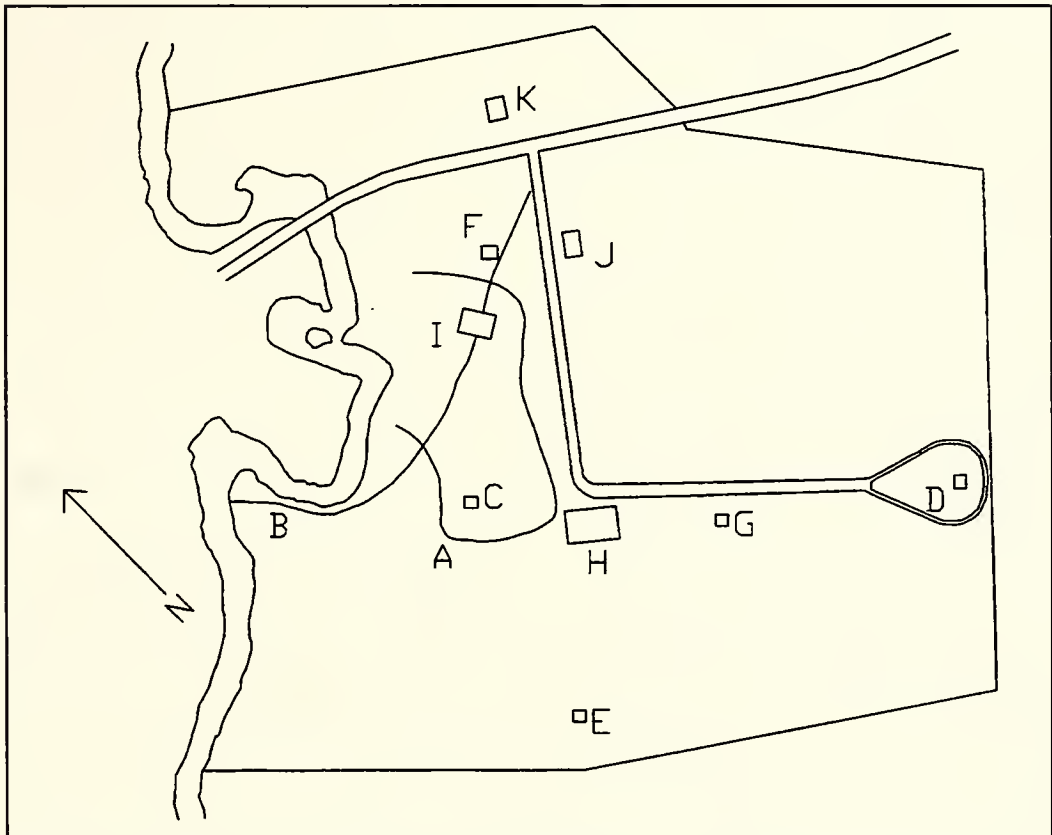


Figure 4. A map of the Moores Creek battlefield in 1925. The key is as follows: earthwork remains, A; the historic road causeway, B; the Patriot Monument, C; the Heroic Women Monument, D; the Loyalist Monument, E; the Stage Road Monument, F; the Moore Monument, G; the large pavilion, H; the small pavilion, I; the office, J; and the keeper's residence, K.

The physical development of the Moores Creek battleground was guided by the MCMA's vision of the site as a commemorative park for annual celebrations and other recreational uses. The ten-acre tract was expanded in 1907 with the purchase of twenty acres. While preserving traces of the historic road causeway and earthworks at the site, the MCMA superimposed a formal park landscape that included straight roads, lawns, ornamental plantings, and monuments with iron fencing. The MCMA began erecting recreational facilities in 1899 with the construction of a large pavilion for use during the celebrations. However, the main period of development occurred between 1907 and 1908 with the construction of a second pavilion, two concession stands, two artesian wells, a keeper's residence, a jail, a stable, and fencing around the park. The original pavilion burned in 1919, giving way to construction of a floored pavilion in 1922 along with two latrines and two well gazebos. Besides these facilities, the MCMA's development of the site included additional monuments such as the 1907 Heroic Women of the Lower Cape Fear Monument in memory of Mary Slocumb, the 1909 Loyalist Monument, the 1911 Stage Road Monument, and the 1913 Moore Monument in memory of the association's first president. In 1909, two Civil War cannon with carriages were donated by the U.S. Congress to the association for use at the battleground.⁹

The MCMA, renamed the Moores Creek Battleground Association (MCBA) in 1915, managed the battleground as a commemorative and recreational site for nearly three decades. By the 1920s, the association was pursuing federal designation of the battleground as a national military park.¹⁰

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MOORES CREEK NATIONAL MILITARY PARK

At the MCBA's August 1923 meeting, U.S. Congressman Charles L. Abernethy agreed to spearhead the effort to designate the Moores Creek battleground as a national military park. In May 1924, he introduced a bill authorizing its establishment, but the bill saw no activity during the session. On the battle's anniversary in 1925, the North Carolina General Assembly passed two resolutions concerning the battleground—one calling for the creation of a national military park and the other authorizing the donation of the site to the federal government for that purpose. With support from the state, Abernethy again introduced the bill as House Resolution (HR) 3796 in December 1925, while Senator Lee Slater Overman introduced companion legislation in the Senate. Supporters of the bill received endorsements from several sources. The Army War College issued a report detailing the Battle of Moores Creek Bridge; the reference section of the Library of Congress prepared a similar document. A resolution in support of a national military park at Moores Creek was passed by the North Carolina State Conference of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) and endorsed by the National Society of the DAR at a Washington meeting in April 1926.¹¹

HR 3796 received a public hearing before the House Military Affairs Committee on April 20 and 21, 1926. Speakers included Abernethy and a delegation of North Carolina DAR members. Abernethy discussed the resolutions of the North Carolina General Assembly, the Army War College report, and the resolution of the National Society of the DAR in arguing for the creation of a national military park. DAR members testified before the committee as to the significance of the Battle of Moores Creek Bridge. They described the battle as the South's Lexington and compared Mary Slocumb's ride to that of Paul Revere. In addition to the battleground's historical significance, arguments on behalf of the legislation reflected some of the prevailing concerns over the nation's growing immigrant population. One DAR member stated "I feel that in this day, with the coming of so much flotsam and jetsam from foreign countries, it is of the very highest importance to preserve as national monuments places of such historical importance as Moores Creek battle field."¹² On May 6, the committee reported to the House with a recommendation that the bill be approved.¹³

With the favorable committee report, the House passed HR 3796 on May 12, 1926. The following day, the bill was referred to the Senate Library Committee and received a recommendation for approval. Overman directed the bill through this committee rather than the Senate Military Affairs Committee due to concern that the latter body would be less supportive. After passage by the Senate on May 20, HR 3796 was signed into law by President Calvin Coolidge on June 2.¹⁴ The State of North Carolina deeded the thirty-acre battleground to the United States on July 8, and the War Department officially accepted responsibility for operating Moores Creek National Military Park (NMP) on August 23.¹⁵

Had Congress not passed the Moores Creek legislation in 1926, the national military park may have never been established. The number of bills for new national military parks skyrocketed during the 1920s due to patriotic fervor following the nation's victory in World War I, a booming economy, and increased automobile travel. Congress was overwhelmed by the number of proposals and the potential costs of developing and maintaining additional parks. Nine days after Coolidge signed the Moores Creek legislation into law, Congress passed a bill commissioning the War Department to study the significance of the nation's battlegrounds and recommend appropriate strategies for commemoration. Conducted from 1926 to 1932 with periodic reports to Congress, the study classified the battlegrounds into three categories. Class I battlefields were deemed worthy of national military park status; Class IIA battlefields required extensive interpretive marker schemes; and Class IIB battlefields required a single tablet, marker, or monument on a tract of minimal size. Although the War Department classified Moores Creek as a Class IIB battlefield, a park at the battleground site had already been authorized by Congress.¹⁶

Moores Creek became the ninth federal battlefield park created by Congress. The legislation passed during a fiscally conservative time when Congress felt overwhelmed by numerous proposals for national military parks, including ones commemorating battles arguably more significant than Moores Creek. Congress approved the legislation for Moores Creek while rejecting other proposals for several reasons. First, the state and the MCMA had already developed the battleground as a park. Second, the battleground was a small site that required minimal maintenance costs. Third, the state agreed to donate the property to the federal government. Fourth, Congress passed the legislation prior to the adoption of a systematic approach to creating national military parks. In the end, the relatively small scale of the Moores Creek proposal seemed more reasonable to Congress than other proposals for larger parks with greater costs.¹⁷

WAR DEPARTMENT ADMINISTRATION, 1926-1933

After assuming control of Moores Creek NMP, the War Department appointed George J. Moore, the second president of the MCBA, as superintendent. In 1928, he received approval for a caretaker position and hired his son, Charles P. Moore. Essentially, the staff's duties were to maintain the orderly appearance of the grounds and assist in the coordination of occasional celebrations by the association. These gatherings continued to be the only significant use of the park for several years after its establishment.¹⁸

Like the MCBA, the War Department managed Moores Creek as a commemorative park for recreational use. No attempt was made to recreate the battle-period landscape, as staff routinely mowed the grounds and annually burned the swamp. Areas around the monuments and along the roads were sodded and planted with formal flowers and shrubbery. New facilities included a barn and a stable to house the park's horse and mower.¹⁹



Figures 5 and 6. The War Department Monument and the reconstructed bridge, 1938

Beyond formal landscaping, the War Department's development activities at the park consisted mainly of erecting several commemorative and interpretive structures. Perhaps the most interesting of these additions were the graves of Mary and Ezekiel Slocumb at the base of the Heroic Women Monument. In 1927, Abernethy and the DAR's Stamp Defiance Chapter in Wilmington suggested that the remains of the Slocumbs be relocated from Mount Olive, North Carolina, to further commemorate Mary Slocumb's ride. After delays due to a 1928 flood, reinterment took place in September 1929. In addition, the War Department undertook the first significant effort to interpret the actual events of the battle—a significant change from the MCBA's commemorative focus. Inscribed with a text prepared by the Army War College, the Battle of Moore's Creek Bridge Monument was erected in 1931. During the same year, the battle-period bridge was reconstructed at the historic creek crossing, although the design was based solely on conjecture rather than authenticating research.²⁰

The final development action by the War Department at Moore's Creek was the installation of entrance gates in 1932.²¹ On August 10, 1933, the War Department's administration of the park ended as President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Executive Orders 6166 and 6228 transferred federal battlefields to the National Park Service (NPS) within the Department of the Interior.²²

NOTES

¹ Gibbs, 13-14; Clyde B. King, *Moore's Creek Battlefield* (National Park Service, 1939), 1-2.

² King, 2-3; "The Battle Ground," *Wilmington Messenger*, August 1899, Park Files, Moore's Creek National Battlefield, Currie, North Carolina.

³ King, 3; Gibbs, 42.

⁴ Gibbs, 42.

⁵ Ronald F. Lee, *The Origin and Evolution of the National Military Park Idea* (Washington: National Park Service, 1973), 7-8; Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 3-8.

⁶ Thomas E. Baker, *Redeemed from Oblivion: An Administrative History of Guilford Courthouse National Military Park* (National Park Service, 1995), 3-9.

⁷ Moores Creek Monumental Association Minutes, July 4, 1899, Park Files; Minutes, April 8, 1899; King, 3-6; Gibbs, 16-23.

⁸ King, 3-6; Minutes, July 26, 1900; Edmund B. Rogers, compiler, *History of Legislation Relating to the National Park Service Through the 82d Congress: Moores Creek* (Washington: National Park Service, 1958), Part I, 1-5.

⁹ Gibbs, 17-20; King, 3-6; Minutes, July 17, 1899; July 29, 1899; April 8, 1908; July 4, 1922; Rogers, Part I, 4; J.W. Flynn, *Plan of Moores Creek Battle Field*, Drawing 324-650, Map Collection, Southeast Regional Office, National Park Service, Atlanta.

¹⁰ King, 6; Minutes, August 9, 1923.

¹¹ Minutes, August 9, 1923; Rogers, Part I, 5-6; House Military Affairs Committee, *Hearings before the Committee on Military Affairs, House of Representatives, Sixty-ninth Congress, First Session, on H.R. 3796: National Military Park at Battle Field of Moores Creek, N.C.* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1926), 1-10; Gibbs, 21-22.

¹² House Military Affairs Committee, 1-10.

¹³ Rogers, Part I, 6.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*; Gibbs, 22.

¹⁵ U.S. Congress, House, *Supplemental Estimates for War Department*, 70th Congress, 1st Session, H.R. Document 137 (1928), 2.

¹⁶ Lee, *Origin and Evolution*, 38-51; Ronald F. Lee, *Family Tree of the National Park System: A Chart with Accompanying Text Designed to Illustrate the Growth of the National Park System, 1872-1972* (Philadelphia: Eastern National Park and Monument Association, 1972), 27-30; U.S. Congress, Senate, *Study of Battle Fields in the United States for Commemorative Purposes*, 70th Congress, 2nd Session, Senate Document Number 187, (1928), 1-4, reprinted in Rogers.

¹⁷ Lee, *Family Tree*, 27-30; Lee, *The Origin and Evolution*, 46-50.

¹⁸ Gibbs, 25.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 23.

²⁰ King, 5; Gibbs, 22-25.

²¹ *Historical Papers and Photographs of Moores Creek*, Vol. 1, 1856-1933, Park Files. The park maintains fourteen volumes of bound materials dating from 1856 to 1977 and arranged in chronological order.

²² Rogers, Part II, 2.

CHAPTER THREE

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT AT MOORES CREEK

EARLY PARK DEVELOPMENT, 1933-1956

At first, the transfer of Moores Creek NMP to the NPS brought about little change. George Moore continued as superintendent until his retirement in 1935, while Charles Moore continued as caretaker. Due to low attendance in 1933, the MCBA discontinued the celebrations and became inactive for a decade. The NPS was pleased to see the celebrations end since they had no association with the historical significance of the park and brought large crowds that damaged park resources.¹

Due to limited funding, initial NPS work at Moores Creek NMP involved minor improvements to the grounds and drainage system. Between August 1933 and July 1935, park staff hauled silt from the low grounds adjacent to the creek and distributed it over the area enclosed by the earthworks. The ground was harrowed and disked to prepare a seed bed; grass was then planted in the area using lime and fertilizer to facilitate growth. Ground that had been sterile was consequently covered with vegetation. In addition, the park installed a drain for one ditch. A gas-powered generator was installed in 1934 to run the water pump and generate electric power.²

Following Moore's retirement, the regional office appointed Clyde B. King³ superintendent and directed him to report to Coordinating Superintendent B. Floyd Flickinger of Colonial National Historical Park in Virginia. Flickinger was to oversee Moores Creek NMP as part of a southern Revolutionary War group that included Guilford Courthouse NMP, Kings Mountain NMP, and Cowpens National Battlefield Site. In April 1936, Flickinger made his first inspection tour of Moores Creek and recommended immediate upgrades in the park's day-to-day administration, including paperwork and record-keeping procedures.⁴

Between 1936 and 1938, King initiated planning for the park's development. His vision called for a complete reorientation of the park's layout to emphasize the historical significance of the site over its commemorative and recreational functions. To this end, the core battleground area was to be restored by removing intrusions such as the MCMA's buildings, roadways, formal plantings, and fencing around the monuments. The historic appearance of this area was to be achieved by fully reconstructing the earthworks, the historic road causeway, and a more accurate bridge. The landscape was to be restored to its historic appearance with curvilinear trails following natural contours. New recreational and support facilities were to be located on the periphery of the battleground. The



Figure 7. The entrance to Moore's Creek National Military Park, 1938

superintendent's residence across Highway 602 from the park entrance was to be replaced by a picnic area with a parking area, an information station, restrooms, and concession stands. An area northeast of the Heroic Women Monument was to be the support area with a superintendent's residence, a laborer's residence, a garage and storage shed, an administrative office and museum, and utility structures. In order to accommodate the new facilities and provide fire breaks, at least thirty acres were to be acquired for park boundary extensions. King's general development plans were accepted by Flickinger, the director of Region I, and the director of the NPS.⁵

Like many grand ideas, King's plan lacked funding. One source that he attempted to tap was the work programs of the New Deal. The Civilian Conservation Corps, Work Projects Administration, Public Works Administration (PWA), and other programs undertook numerous projects for local, state, and federal parks during the Great Depression.⁶ Several times during the 1930s, NPS officials unsuccessfully sought PWA funds for the development of Moore's Creek. The main problem was the lack of technical staff at the park to prepare the plans necessary to gain PWA assistance. Despite King's requests, his superiors were unable to provide needed technical support. After an unsuccessful attempt for a six-year PWA project in 1938, NPS officials decided to proceed with development plans without outside funding.⁷

In the continued absence of funding for major development activities between 1936 and 1938, King undertook modest efforts to restore the battleground landscape, improve the drainage system, and adapt the MCMA's buildings for temporary use. Mowing of certain areas was discontinued, and certain varieties of native trees and shrubs were planted. A number of the MCMA's drainage ditches were eliminated; others were tiled to prevent further erosion. In some cases, new ditches were dug to take advantage of the topography and natural drainage patterns. This work resulted in

a more effective system with fewer ditches. Lacking funds for new construction, the park adapted the existing MCMA buildings for new uses. One of the concession stands became a temporary office; another building was used to house the park's two electric generators.⁸

In 1938, the regional office began paying more attention to Moores Creek, resulting in the park's first formal master plan. Archeologist Thor Borresen visited the park in February to gather information for the master plan. He excavated cross sections of the earthworks and determined the original height and breadth. Profile drawings of the proposed reconstructed earthworks were completed in May.⁹ In March, the park was visited by four staff members from the regional office, including Regional Historian Roy Edgar Appleman. He noted that the park "is undoubtedly one of the areas under the jurisdiction of the Park Service which needs attention." While emphasizing the need for formal planning, Appleman recommended development steps similar to King's plan, including acquiring land west of the creek, building a nature trail along the creek with a footbridge, placing interpretive markers on the battleground, and improving highway signs directing motorists to the park.¹⁰

With completion of a master plan in 1938, development at Moores Creek began in earnest. Intrusions within the historic core of the battleground were removed, including a concessions stand, the large pavilion, ornamental plantings, and roads. In addition, the Battle of Moores Creek Bridge Monument and the Stage Road Monument were relocated to less conspicuous locations. Remaining MCMA buildings were adapted for new uses. The small pavilion was enclosed and remodeled for use as a temporary museum, and the barn was relocated as a fuel house. The stable was remodeled for use as a picnic shelter with the surrounding grounds serving as a picnic area.



Figure 8. The temporary office, large pavilion, and covered well, 1936

New facilities in this area included outdoor ovens, seats, and tables built with lumber salvaged from the large pavilion. This work marked the gradual transition of the battleground from a commemorative and recreational park to a historical site with some degree of integrity. The park sought to encourage its educational use by smaller groups, especially school children.¹¹

Besides the above improvements, King pushed for partial restoration of the earthworks, which had suffered damage from weathering and earlier development activities. He proposed repair of the earthworks at points where roads had been cut through by the MCMA. The master plan had proposed full restoration to battle-period conditions, but the park could not afford the resultant increase in maintenance costs. King considered repair of the road cuts a feasible alternative to full reconstruction. Regional officials agreed but wanted an archeologist to be present during the work.¹²

Believing that he had full permission from regional officials, King began repair of the disturbed sections of the earthworks in December 1939 without an archeologist present. Although successful in reestablishing a complete line of earthworks, he was criticized for proceeding without an archeologist. Regional officials maintained that the work actually constituted reconstruction rather than repair. Interestingly, Borresen later concluded that no damage had been done to the earthworks.¹³

Besides the earthworks restoration project, King drew criticism for his decision to enclose the small pavilion for use as a museum. The regional director questioned King's authority since such plans required clearance from the regional supervisor for historic sites and the branch for plans and design. King responded that he had acted on the understanding that building alterations for maintenance purposes were within the authority of the park superintendent. He maintained that adaptation of the pavilion did not constitute a new project and that his intention was only to temporarily use the building. King assured the regional director that any plans for a permanent structure would be conducted through proper channels.¹⁴

Although King transferred to the Natchez Trace Parkway in January 1942, development at Moore's Creek continued to focus on ways of upgrading the park and attracting more visitors. King's successor, Oswald E. Camp, further developed the picnic area by installing drinking fountains enclosed within hollow cypress stumps to blend with the natural environment. Camp urged county and state officials to improve the approach roads to the remote park for better visitor access. After Camp enlisted the aid of the Wilmington Chamber of Commerce and the North Carolina State Department of Archives and History, Highway 602 was widened during November 1942 in preparation for paving. However, the project was delayed by the nation's mobilization effort during World War II.¹⁵

Visitation at Moore's Creek NMP increased during the war when soldiers stationed at nearby Camp Davis and workers from the Wilmington shipyards began visiting the park during off-duty hours. On several occasions, the park was made available to soldiers for day-long outings. The first of these occasions attracted a crowd of 650 people in June 1943. Two months later, the 225th Searchlight Battalion visited the park; 550 soldiers and their wives attended. In addition to recreational outings, the park accommodated the U.S. Army during maneuvers at Burgaw. The park provided water for the troops as well as dry grass for mattresses. Such activities continued until Camp Davis was closed in October 1944.¹⁶

Meanwhile, regional and park staffs devised new development plans for the park. One area of contention was Camp's insistence on a museum. Although the park had no artifacts for display, he

considered a museum to be essential for interpretive purposes. Coordinating Superintendent Jean C. Harrington and the regional director disagreed. In their opinion, a museum was unnecessary since the battleground itself was sufficient to tell the story. Indeed, Harrington argued that the park did not even need to be staffed throughout the year. The regional director thought a modest contact shelter could function as the focal point for visitors with space for a historical display, storage of pamphlets, comfort facilities, and a public shelter. Camp disagreed and continued to push for the museum.¹⁷

Camp also sought to acquire additional land. Since the park lacked authority from Congress to accept more acreage, U.S. Congressman Graham A. Barden of North Carolina introduced legislation in 1942 calling for the park's enlargement. Endorsed by the secretary of the interior, the bill authorized acceptance of donated property. However, the legislation stalled in Congress and did not pass during the session. In October 1943, Barden introduced almost identical legislation, HR 3384, which again authorized acceptance of donated property.¹⁸ Delayed by World War II, Congress finally approved HR 3384 on September 27, 1944. At a conference in Wilmington the following year, the state agreed to fund the land acquisition. Between 1947 and 1948, the North Carolina General Assembly appropriated the necessary funds and purchased over twelve acres for donation to the park. Transfer of the land took place during the 175th anniversary observance of the battle in 1951.¹⁹

A 1944 list of proposed construction projects at Moores Creek NMP included trails, roads, parking areas, utility facilities, and a superintendent's residence. However, these projects would have to wait until the Mission 66 development program due to lack of funding.²⁰ By 1945, the War Department's 1931 reconstructed bridge was in danger of collapse. Although reconstruction of the battle-period bridge was a priority, NPS officials decided against it since little was known of its design and any reconstruction would be based on conjecture. The park removed the bridge's timbers and left the concrete abutments in place. A second reconstruction would have to wait until more research could be conducted.²¹

Despite drainage system improvements since 1933, the park continued to experience flooding in its low areas. A September 1945 flood was unusually severe with six feet of water flowing through the park's office. Besides periodic flooding, the park suffered damage from hurricanes that hit the coastal plain of North Carolina during the 1940s and 1950s. Winds during an August 1944 hurricane removed the Moore Monument's obelisk from its base. Between 1954 and 1960, Hurricanes Hazel, Connie, Diane, Helena, and Donna flooded low areas and destroyed dozens of trees at the park.²² Weather problems continue to plague the park. In 1996, Hurricanes Bertha and Fran caused flooding, downed trees, and closed the park for more than forty days. Further flooding in 1998 closed off access to sections of the park for more than a week.²³

With World War II over, the state began paving Highway 602 in 1946. In November 1950, the highway was dedicated as the Moores Creek Battleground Highway. During the following year, the highway bridge across Moores Creek was replaced. The road was redesignated as Highway 210 in January 1952.²⁴

By 1943, a revived MCBA renewed its annual celebrations. In addition, the association began sponsoring annual Easter services at the park. Within a few years, the MCBA was lobbying for improved facilities to accommodate these activities. At a meeting called by North Carolina State Senator J.V. Whitfield, the association asked the NPS to construct a meeting room and amphitheater. Harrington responded that the NPS would consider incorporating a meeting room into a future



Figure 9. The superintendent's residence during the 1945 flood

administration building but that the amphitheater idea would need more study.²⁵ A major obstacle to fulfilling the MCBA's request was the lack of NPS funding. Consequently, the association approached Barden with draft legislation for a federal appropriation to construct an auditorium at the park. In January 1950, Barden introduced the bill into the U.S. House of Representatives where it was refused passage. The MCBA continued to press its case for the next fifteen years.²⁶

Since its establishment, Moore's Creek NMP had enjoyed strong local support. In 1954, this support was galvanized by a park closure threat. In January of that year, the *Raleigh News & Observer* published an article about Secretary of the Interior Douglas McKay's report on the potential divestiture of NPS areas believed to be of questionable national significance. Moore's Creek was identified as one of the areas to be examined for possible removal from the national park system. After the *Wilmington Star-News* published a similar article, a storm of public protest led to a mass meeting on the issue at the Pender County Courthouse. In addition, the NPS and the Department of the Interior were flooded with letters urging retention of the park. For its part, the MCBA organized a committee to meet with NPS Director Conrad L. Wirth. The meeting proved unnecessary when the NPS reaffirmed Moore's Creek's significance to the national park system, thereby assuring its continued existence as a national park.²⁷

MISSION 66 AT MOORES CREEK, 1956-1969

Due to limited funding during World War II, the NPS undertook few park improvement efforts. After the war, visitation to national parks exploded due to economic prosperity, increased leisure time, and greater automobile use. Visitation at Moores Creek, for example, increased from 8,000 in 1949 to 26,000 in 1956. At parks across the nation, outdated facilities were ill-suited to meet the needs of increasing numbers of visitors. Consequently, NPS Director Wirth convinced the Eisenhower Administration and Congress to support a ten-year building program, which was coined Mission 66. Initiated in the mid-1950s at a cost in excess of one billion dollars, Mission 66 sought to substantially upgrade park facilities nationwide in time for the fiftieth anniversary of the NPS in 1966. Like many small parks, Moores Creek was transformed by Mission 66.²⁸

In March 1958, the NPS began Mission 66 improvements at Moores Creek with the letting of contracts for the removal of existing buildings and groundbreaking ceremonies for a major building program. By January 1959, the J.W. Hunter Construction Company of Wilmington had completed a visitor center with a museum, an equipment storage building, and two employee residences. Later that year, Greenbriar Farms of Norfolk, Virginia, completed a contract for erection of a flagpole and landscaping for the visitor center and residential areas. Other Mission 66 work included the construction of an entrance road, a parking area, additional trails, and a sixty-foot water storage tank.²⁹

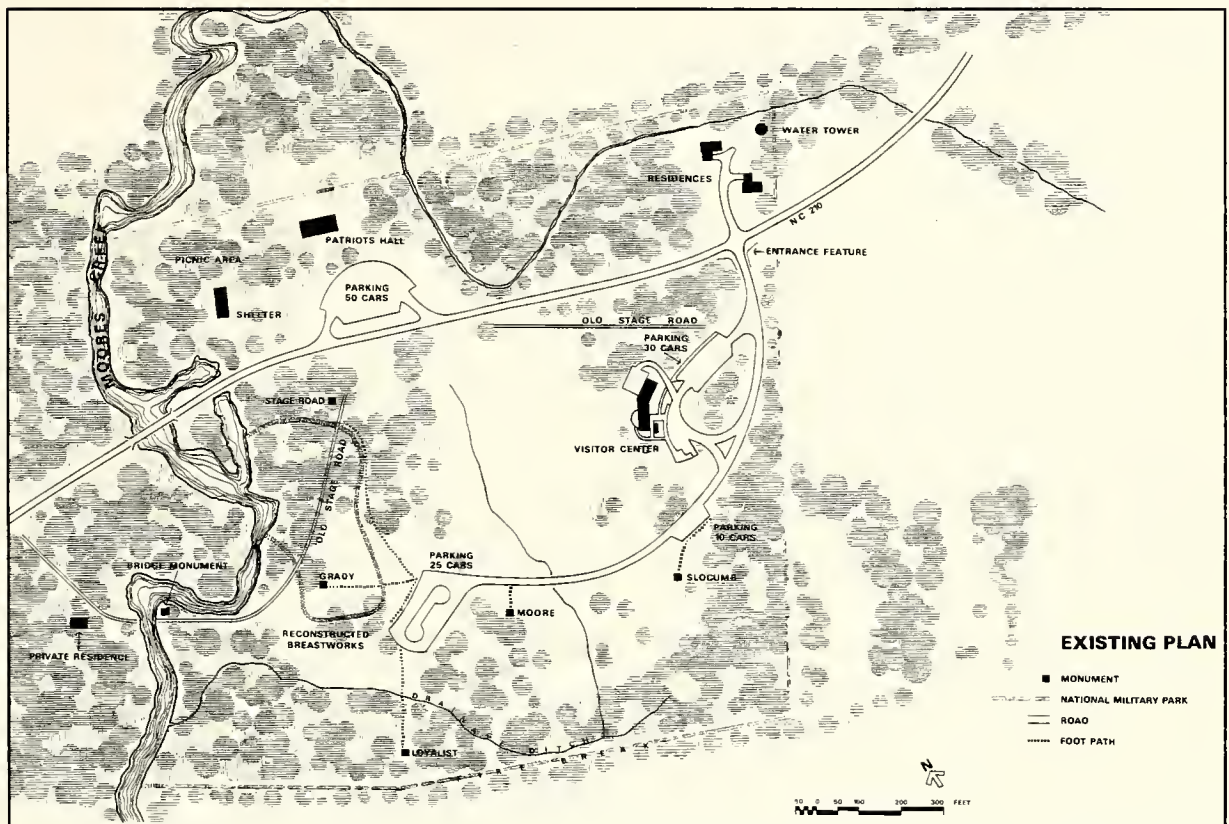


Figure 10. A 1972 map of Moores Creek showing the Mission 66 layout



Figure 11. The Mission 66 visitor center at Moore's Creek

With the completion of major Mission 66 projects, Moore's Creek had finally acquired the essential facilities to operate independent of Colonial National Historical Park. In July, the regional office instructed the park superintendent to assume responsibility for all administrative functions and report directly to the regional director. Appointed in February 1959, James M. Ford was the first superintendent to manage the park under this new arrangement.³⁰

As the Mission 66 program at the park neared completion in 1964, the MCBA renewed efforts to have a meeting hall built for special gatherings. The association wanted a building and amphitheater on the slope between the visitor center and the earthworks; however, NPS officials objected that this plan would be an intrusion on the battleground. Instead, the regional director proposed a shelter with a speaking platform and restrooms near the picnic area located across Highway 210 from the earthworks and the historic bridge site.³¹

In January 1965, the chief architect of the NPS met with U.S. Congressman David N. Henderson and Whitfield to discuss the MCBA's proposed meeting hall. The existing facilities in the picnic area consisted of an open shelter, pit privies, and no definite parking area, drives, or walks. Since the area was almost entirely situated within the floodplain, the proposed structure would be located on higher ground at the site of the 1907 superintendent's house, which had been demolished in 1959 as part of Mission 66 activities. Designed as a forty-foot-by-ninety-foot building constructed of materials compatible with the natural environment, the proposed structure included meeting space, audiovisual capabilities, and restrooms. However, only \$47,300 had been programmed for all remaining Mission 66 development activities, including utilities, landscape improvements, a

new entrance road, parking, and walks. Since the estimated cost for the meeting building alone was \$37,000, the politicians were forced to seek additional money.³²

Through the lobbying of the MCBA, additional funds were allocated for a facility that would serve as a picnic shelter, meeting hall, and comfort station, including a parking area, an entrance road, utilities, and improved grounds. The park awarded the contract to Dixie General Contractors of Wallace, North Carolina. In August 1965, the contractor cleared the site and began work. Upon its completion the following year, the facility was dedicated by the park as Patriots Hall.

The issue of expansion proved less fruitful. The acquisition of 12.23 acres in 1951 had allowed for the construction of the Mission 66 entrance road and parking area, but the park still lacked sufficient land for full development of the planned facilities. As both state senator and president of the MCBA, Whitfield began urging the NPS to acquire land on the west side of the creek, which had been the site of Caswell's camp the night before the battle. Whitfield believed acquisition would enable the park to reconstruct the battle-period bridge; however, the land west of the creek had not been identified in the park's acquisition program. The NPS considered the creek a logical natural boundary and had concerns about potential protection problems in a detached area, which the land west of the creek represented. In addition, reconstruction of the bridge was not a park priority since little was known about the battle-period bridge. Nevertheless, Whitfield and the MCBA continued to pursue state funding for land acquisition.³³

Meanwhile, other Mission 66 projects were completed. A well was dug in the vicinity of the elevated tank, and its natural flow entered a six-hundred-gallon underground tank. The water was then pumped to the elevated tank and treated with sulfuric acid to prevent precipitates. Dixie General Contractors completed construction of a brick-veneered wall and gate at the park entrance. In addition, this company worked with the state highway department to improve the drainage system adjacent to Highway 210 at the park entrance. A post and split rail fence was installed on both sides of the highway through the park.³⁴

Flooding had long been a serious problem at the park. Since Moores Creek was always prone to overflow its banks, previous drainage measures were never completely successful in protecting the park. Though drainage ditches reduced the area's dampness and high water table, flooding continued. In 1965, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers proposed clearing the creek and digging a bypass channel to improve the drainage of floodwaters. Park Superintendent Russell A. Gibbs had reservations about the plan because of the possibility that the existing creek bed, which included the historic bridge site, would fill in or become a backwater swamp. In addition, the bypass would cut through land on the west side of the creek—the site of Caswell's camp. At a December meeting with the Corps of Engineers, the MCBA joined the NPS in expressing its concerns. In the end, the proposed channel was never built.³⁵

By the late 1960s, Mission 66 development activities at Moores Creek NMP had been completed and the emphasis shifted to maintaining the new facilities. Painting and cleaning schedules were instituted for the visitor center, Patriots Hall, and the employee residences. Grounds work consisted of routine activities such as tree trimming and periodic repair of the drainage ditches. With completion of the Mission 66 program, limited funding and staffing levels once again curtailed park initiatives.³⁶

DEVELOPMENT UNDER MASTER AND DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLANS, 1969-1998

In 1969, park and regional staffs prepared the Moore's Creek NMP Master Plan. Among the plan's priorities were the acquisition of additional land, the relocation of Highway 210 from the center of the park, and the restoration of the landscape to its battle-period appearance. These and other goals were outlined in more detail in the Moore's Creek NMP Development Concept Plan (DCP) several years later.³⁷

In 1970, a team from the regional office highlighted problems caused by the shortage of funds and staffing at the park. The report recommended that more money be allocated to the park and that the permanent staff of four be increased to six. It also suggested that consideration be given to clustering Moore's Creek with Cape Hatteras National Seashore or Cape Lookout National Seashore. Overall, the report concluded that there was an attitude of indifference toward the park by regional officials who considered Moore's Creek “. . . as an end of the line, low priority park, largely because of its small size, isolated location, little known story, and low visitation.”³⁸

Even with the limitations faced by park staff, the planning process continued with the completion of the Moore's Creek DCP in 1972. Prepared by landscape architect Geoffrey Swan, this plan outlined the park's future physical development in accordance with the 1969 park master plan. The most important proposal in the DCP was acquisition of lands adjacent to the park, including twenty-one acres to the east, twelve acres to the west, and two and one half acres to the north. Possession of these lands would allow for the relocation of Highway 210, the preservation of the west bank of Moore's Creek, and the creation of buffer zones around the park's historic and developed areas. The relocation of Highway 210 was a significant component since the highway was a major visual intrusion on the historic scene and a safety hazard. Once the highway's roadbed was removed, the park's layout could be redesigned. In addition, the DCP called for the creek to be restored to its battle-period course. The existing entrance road would be replaced by a new road leading directly to the visitor center with spurs to the residential area and Patriots Hall. The drive between the visitor center and the earthworks would be removed along with its two parking areas. Additional parking areas were planned for both the visitor center and Patriots Hall. New interpretive trails would be developed through the earthworks and past the monuments, three of which would be relocated. A nature trail loop was to be constructed south of the visitor center. In order to improve interpretation, the historic bridge would once again be reconstructed; a separate footbridge would provide access to the west side of the creek; and new interpretive markers would be placed along the trails, including some audio units. Three zones—historic, transitional, and developed—would be designated for the purpose of vegetation management.³⁹

The development proposals in the DCP received a boost when the NPS included Moore's Creek in its American Revolution Bicentennial development program. From July 1973 to June 1976, this program sought to upgrade facilities in time for the nation's bicentennial at the twenty-three national parks with thematic ties to the American Revolution. For parks like Moore's Creek, the approaching Bicentennial provided cause for significant improvements.⁴⁰

In September 1974, the park initiated its plan under the American Revolution Bicentennial development program. The Simon Construction Company of Wilmington began removal of the drive between the visitor center and the battleground parking areas and relocation of the Loyalist and Patriot Monuments. By March 1975, the asphalt drive and parking areas throughout the historic zone had been removed, and a new soil-cement trail had been constructed from the visitor center through the historic area. A loop nature trail was created in the wooded area southeast of the

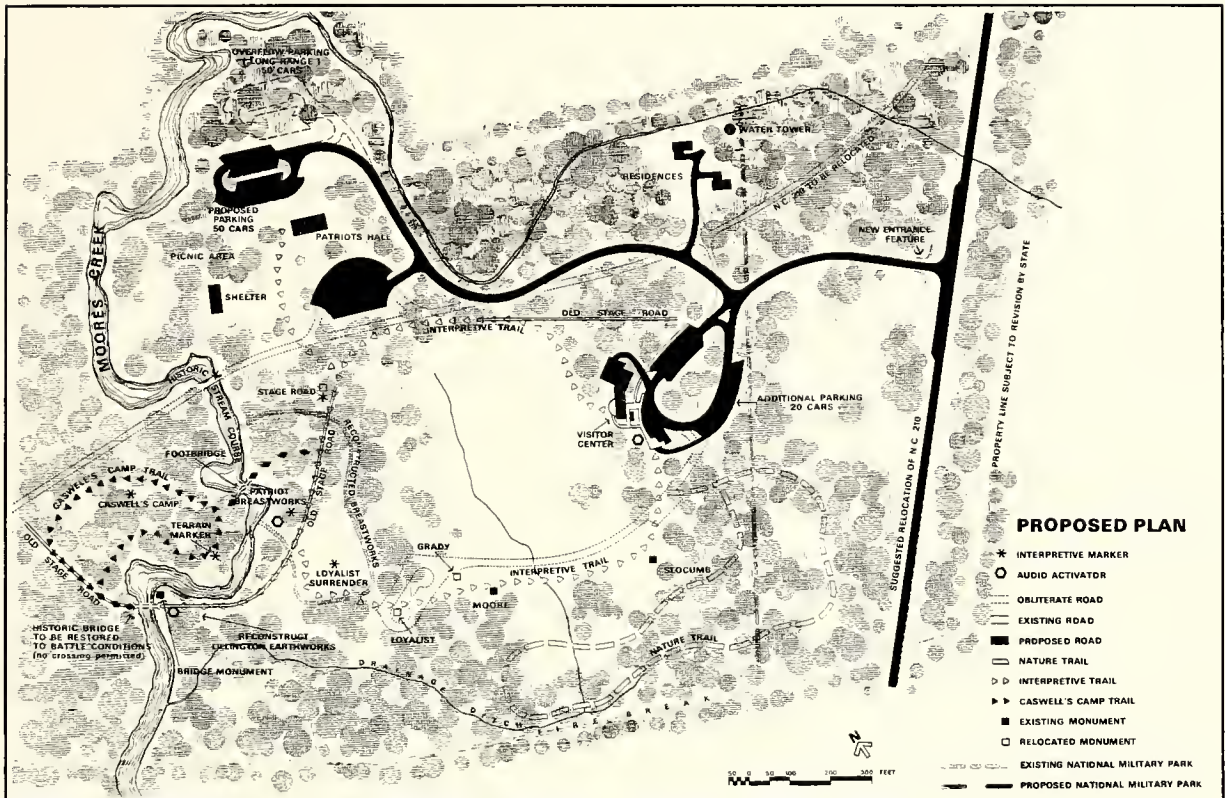


Figure 12. A map from the 1972 DCP showing the proposed changes to the park's layout

visitor center. The parking lots at the visitor center and Patriots Hall were enlarged, and asphalt walks were added. In addition, the visitor center was renovated. By the Bicentennial in 1976, several major DCP proposals were completed.⁴¹

During the Bicentennial, greater attention was given to maintaining the park grounds. Curbs, sidewalks, and roads were edged; shrubs were trimmed and shaped; dead material was removed from the trees; and all use areas were cleaned of leaves and other debris. Shrubs were even removed to facilitate crowd movement, stored at a nursery, and later replanted.⁴²

In 1978, Superintendent John Stockert attempted to solve a problem that had long been a concern at Moores Creek. Over a number of years, the historic road causeway leading to the bridge site had suffered from steady erosion. Stockert requested the U.S. Department of Agriculture's district conservationist to investigate the problem and suggest solutions to mitigate the erosion. The investigation determined that the erosion was a natural process and could not be stopped, but the district conservationist offered alternatives to stabilize the slopes. In November 1980, a contract for causeway stabilization with rip-rap and stone was completed by T.D. Eure Construction of Morehead City, North Carolina. Since this action only slowed the rate of erosion, the park continued to haul in sediment after each episode of flooding.⁴³ With conditions again deteriorating, the park received additional funding to stabilize the causeway in 1995. The Corps of Engineers designed and contracted for rip-rap replacement and revegetation. This work was completed by November 1997. The El Nino rains of December 1997 and early 1998 put the causeway under water for almost two months, frequently with swift-moving water. The stabilization efforts have proven

successful, and the park is currently working with the Corps of Engineers to stabilize the area of the reconstructed bridge abutments. A draft plan should be completed by the end of calendar year 1998.⁴⁴

By 1980, the park was prepared to officially change its name as recommended in the master plan. Park officials believed that designating the site as a national battlefield was appropriate since the park had traditionally been known as the “Moores Creek battleground.” In addition, park staff believed that “national battlefield” was a clearer designation for the park than “national military park,” which might suggest a military facility. The idea was endorsed by the MCBA and the local community. Accordingly, on September 8, 1980, the official park name was changed by federal legislation from Moores Creek National Military Park to Moores Creek National Battlefield (NB).⁴⁵

The early 1980s saw the culmination of land acquisition efforts as proposed by both the park master plan and the DCP. Although the North Carolina General Assembly had appropriated funds for land purchases, the proposed acquisition required federal legislation to authorize boundary extensions. This authority was provided in Public Law 93-4771, which was signed by President Richard Nixon on October 26, 1974. Within three years, the park had acquired all of the desired land except for property on the west side of the creek. In 1978, Stockert reported that nearly all of the buildings on the new lands had been removed. However, condemnation proceedings on the land west of the creek continued until 1982. A court trial in Wilmington in mid-March of that year awarded \$125,000 to the owner, Dr. Charles F. Simpson. The federal government had offered \$59,000; Simpson sought \$213,000. With this last tract, Moores Creek NB totaled 86.52 acres in size. Adjacent landowner H.D. Hates donated 1.23 acres along the western boundary in 1997, bringing the total acreage to 87.75.⁴⁶

During the early and mid-1980s, a number of improvements were made to the water and septic systems at the park. This work included the replacement of the two septic tanks in the residential area, the removal of the Mission 66 underground water tank, the replacement of water lines installed during Mission 66 activities, and the installation of new water lines between the visitor center and the earthworks to irrigate the area and to supply water for a new drinking fountain. Lastly, the park received permission from the state to stop treating water with sulfuric acid—a treatment that the park had been required to do since 1967.⁴⁷ In 1994, the water system was further upgraded with the construction of a new water treatment building in the residential area. Built by Moores Creek and Cape Hatteras National Seashore staff members, this structure replaced a smaller one.⁴⁸

In 1986, the long-awaited relocation of Highway 210 finally began, allowing for major alterations to the physical layout of the park. The North Carolina Department of Transportation awarded a contract to remove the existing highway and build a new bypass through a newly acquired tract of park land east of the visitor center. With the highway relocated, the park constructed a new entrance road, realigned the road system within the park, and relocated the picnic area parking lot to a site behind Patriots Hall.⁴⁹

During the 1990s, reconstruction of the historic bridge across Moores Creek was completed after two decades of debate. Although the NPS had decided against reconstruction in 1945 due to insufficient information on the battle-period bridge’s design, the park had never abandoned the idea. Subsequent planning documents, including the 1969 master plan and the 1972 DCP, continued to recommend the bridge’s reconstruction. However, NPS officials at the Denver Service Center and the Southeast Regional Office opposed any further attempt to reconstruct the historic bridge during the 1970s. They argued that reconstruction was generally inconsistent with NPS management

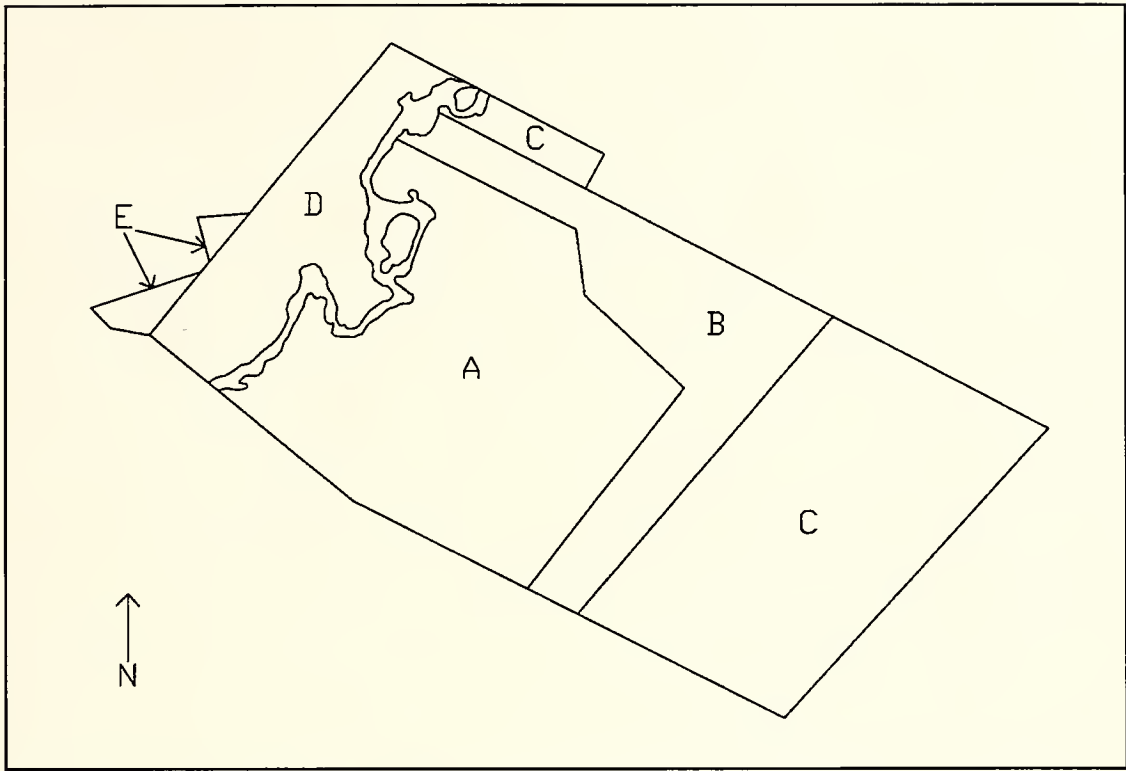


Figure 13. A map showing boundary changes at Moores Creek between 1897 and 1997. The key is as follows: the original 30.0 acres transferred to the NPS in 1933, A; the 12.23 acres acquired in 1951, B; the 35.82 acres acquired in 1974 under the DCP, C; the 11.77 acres acquired after condemnation proceedings in 1982, D; and the 1.23 acres donated in 1997, E.

policies and that an authentic reconstruction could not be assured.⁵⁰ Denver Service Center Historian John Albright recommended against “the folly of using even more time and effort in looking for the exact structure of the bridge.”⁵¹

Besides this opposition, reconstruction of the bridge was further delayed since the land on the west bank of Moores Creek was not within the park’s boundary at the time that the DCP was formulated. With acquisition of the land west of the creek in 1982, the park renewed its research efforts. In 1986, the park received a grant from the Eastern National Park and Monument Association to conduct a study in conjunction with the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Officer. The study provided design guidelines for reconstruction based on a “minimum of conjecture.” With the study’s findings, Superintendent Fred Boyles began pushing for the reconstruction against the opposition of other NPS officials. He met with regional officials in 1987 and prepared a position paper the following year. Boyles argued that a reconstructed bridge was necessary for the interpretation of the battle since other interpretive techniques were inadequate. In addition, he pointed out that the 1974 park expansion legislation was in part justified by the need to reconstruct the bridge. Boyles’s case prevailed and the park received the director’s permission for reconstruction in June 1988.⁵²

Development of the bridge reconstruction plan by the Southeast Region’s Historic Architecture Division was slow but steady. In July 1990, a Corps of Engineers soil analysis of the creek bed resulted in a modification of the bridge’s structural supports from concrete mud sills to concrete

and timber pilings, a design which sought to reduce disturbances to the historic creek bed. Plans were made for U.S. Army troops at Fort Bragg to reconstruct the bridge as a volunteer project, but the initiation of Operation Desert Shield prior to the Persian Gulf War postponed the project indefinitely.⁵³

To get the project moving forward again, the Pender County Commissioners made a donation to the MCBA towards the cost of reconstructing the bridge. Superintendent Dusty Shultz approved the project's feasibility as other donations came in from the local community. Eddie Corbett of Wilmington provided cypress trees for the pilings and the center sleeper of the bridge. The MCBA paid for additional lumber and for the trees to be hand-hewn into timbers. In October and November 1992, following the removal of concrete abutments from the 1931 bridge, the new bridge was constructed by a preservation crew from Cape Hatteras National Seashore. After nearly fifty years, a replica of the historic bridge once again spanned Moore's Creek. With completion of the bridge, the major development proposals of the 1969 master plan and the 1972 DCP had been implemented.⁵⁴

In 1994, NPS agency restructuring brought about several new planning initiatives which affected Moore's Creek NB. The park was placed within the Fort Sumter Group, under the administration of Superintendent John Tucker. Tucker revisited the 1972 DCP and determined that ample direction remained for upgrading existing facilities. In 1996, the History Trail was reconfigured to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act guidelines. The earthcrete was removed; the trail was relocated off the historic road; and a new paved surface was laid. The Tarheel Trail was completely relocated to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and to place the trail on higher ground, directing it past the most visible tar kiln remnant in the park.⁵⁵ Like all federal agencies, the



Figure 14. The completed bridge reconstruction, 1992

NPS undertook a strategic planning process in 1997 to begin meeting the requirements of the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA). Due to the field level implementation of GPRA in the NPS, Moores Creek NB prepared park-specific, five-year goals with mission statements for various areas of park operations and specific actions to achieve stated outcomes.⁵⁶

In 1997, construction began on new restroom facilities in the area just north of the visitor center, including a new lift station and drain field. This doubled the restroom capacity and allowed for potential expansion of the museum area into the footprints of the old restrooms. The plans were provided by the Southeast Support Office, and construction was conducted by staff from Moores Creek, Cape Hatteras National Seashore, and Fort Sumter National Monument. The lift station and drain field work was contracted. The new restrooms officially opened in February 1998.⁵⁷

A number of administrative changes occurred during the late 1990s. By 1996, Fort Sumter National Monument Chief Ranger Ann Childress was serving as Moores Creek's first-line supervisor, visiting the site every month. Administrative Officer Hattie Squires served as team leader for day-to-day operations from June 1995 through September 1996. Chief of Interpretation Linda Brown served in this position between October 1996 and December 1997. An operating budget increase was granted to the park in the 1998 fiscal year, allowing for an on-site superintendency which was assumed by Childress in January 1998. However, the park remained part of the Fort Sumter Group. Cooperative efforts were also renewed with MCBA as the organization neared its centennial. Association member Ken Newbold chaired a meeting of the MCBA board to establish both short- and long-term goals for the organization. In addition, the association gained 501(c)(3) status under the federal tax code as a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization. The group decided to revive the annual picnics to attract new members, and the first one was held in June 1998.⁵⁸

NOTES

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² Final Report on Federal Projects 454 and 456, October 8, 1936, *Historical Papers*, Vol. 1.

³ King served as acting superintendent from October 16, 1936, to December 1, 1936, when he was appointed to the position permanently.

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⁶ Phoebe Cutler, *The Public Landscape of the New Deal* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1985), 5-7, 88.

⁷ Coordinating Superintendent to Director, September 3, 1936, *Historical Papers*, Vol. 1; Coordinating Superintendent to Director, March 2, 1937, *Historical Papers*, Vol. 2; Oliver G. Taylor to Coordinating Superintendent, March 3, 1937, MAR, Box 103; Acting Director to Graham A. Barden, August 29, 1938, *Historical Papers*, Vol. 2; Monthly Report, April 1939.

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¹⁴ Acting Regional Director to Coordinating Superintendent, December 12, 1938, *Historical Papers*, Vol. 2; Superintendent to Coordinating Superintendent, January 14, 1939, *Historical Papers*, Vol. 2.

¹⁵ Superintendent to Coordinating Superintendent, June 27, 1939, MAR, Box 103; Superintendent to District Commissioner, May 16, 1941, MAR, Box 103; Monthly Reports, February, May, November 1942; Superintendent to Coordinating Superintendent, September 20, 1943, MAR, Box 103.

¹⁶ Monthly Reports, May 1941; June-November 1943; April, July, September 1944; Annual Report, 1943.

¹⁷ Superintendent to Regional Director, November 7, 1942, MAR, Box 103; Acting Coordinating Superintendent to Regional Director, November 17, 1942, MAR, Box 103; Acting Regional Director to Superintendent, February 17, 1943, *Historical Papers*, Vol. 3; Superintendent to Regional Director, February 23, 1943, *Historical Papers*, Vol. 3; Coordinating Superintendent to Superintendent, April 27, 1945, MAR, Box 103.

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²⁰ Coordinating Superintendent to Regional Director, September 27, 1943, *Historical Papers*, Vol. 3; Priority Project Construction List, January 1, 1944, *Historical Papers*, Vol. 4.

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²³ Ann Childress, Superintendent, Moores Creek National Battlefield, to Steve Davis, Historian, Southeast Regional Office, July 22, 1998, Moores Creek National Battlefield Research Files, Cultural Resources Stewardship Division, Southeast Regional Office, National Park Service, Atlanta.

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⁴⁵ Superintendent to Regional Director, June 1, 1978, Park Files; Acting Regional Director to Chief, Office of Legislation, May 16, 1979, Park Files; Annual Report, 1980.

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⁵⁰ John Albright, Historian, Historic Preservation, Denver Service Center, to Manager, Historic Preservation Team, Denver Service Center, November 5, 1973; Assistant Director, Park Historic Preservation, to Manager, Historic Preservation Team, Denver Service Center, February 22, 1974; Regional Director, Southeast Region, to Manager, Denver Service Center, December 18, 1976, Moores Creek National Battlefield Research Files.

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⁵⁶ Moores Creek National Battlefield, *Government Performance and Results Act* (National Park Service, 1997), 1-11; hereinafter referred to as GPRA.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

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CHAPTER FOUR

INTERPRETATION AND VISITOR SERVICES

EARLY INTERPRETIVE EFFORTS

Prior to NPS control of Moores Creek in 1933, the battleground had no interpretive program. The MCMA used the site primarily for annual celebrations. Beyond the erection of the Battle of Moores Creek Bridge Monument and the reconstruction of the bridge, the War Department made no attempt to interpret the historical significance of the park. Even during the first three years of NPS administration, little was done to enlighten visitors about the events of the battle.

In 1936, interpretation became a priority when Moores Creek received its first historian ranger position. Consequently, the park began collecting general Revolutionary War materials and contacting local schools about visiting the battleground. Public indifference led the park to start an extensive education program. Superintendent King took charge of the program and gave 167 lectures to nearly sixteen thousand grade school and high school students and teachers. In addition, he gave a fifteen-minute talk about the park on radio station WPTF in Raleigh; mimeographed information circulars were prepared for public distribution.¹ In an effort to improve interpretation at the park, staff prepared text for six interpretive markers and developed educational exhibits for a proposed museum. The central exhibit was to be a map of North Carolina in 1776. Other exhibits would highlight the story of the Moores Creek campaign, the Revolutionary War in the South, natural features in the park, and other national park areas. These ideas were drawn together in a museum plan and submitted to the regional office in May 1939.²

That same year, King enclosed an MCMA dance pavilion for use as a temporary museum to provide visitors with information on events surrounding the battle. Exhibits produced both at Moores Creek and at Colonial National Historical Park focused on the battle's background, the preliminaries, the battle campaign, Patriot artifacts, Loyalist artifacts, the southern campaign, the battlefield, natural history, and other national parks in the region.³

Besides the temporary museum, Moores Creek staff made other improvements to the park's interpretive program before World War II. In 1939, two narrative markers, four site markers, and four signs were placed around the battleground to mark significant points of interest and to direct visitors to the primary historic features. In June 1940, the park published its first information folder. In 1941, the two Civil War cannon were exchanged with Petersburg NB for a 1760 half-

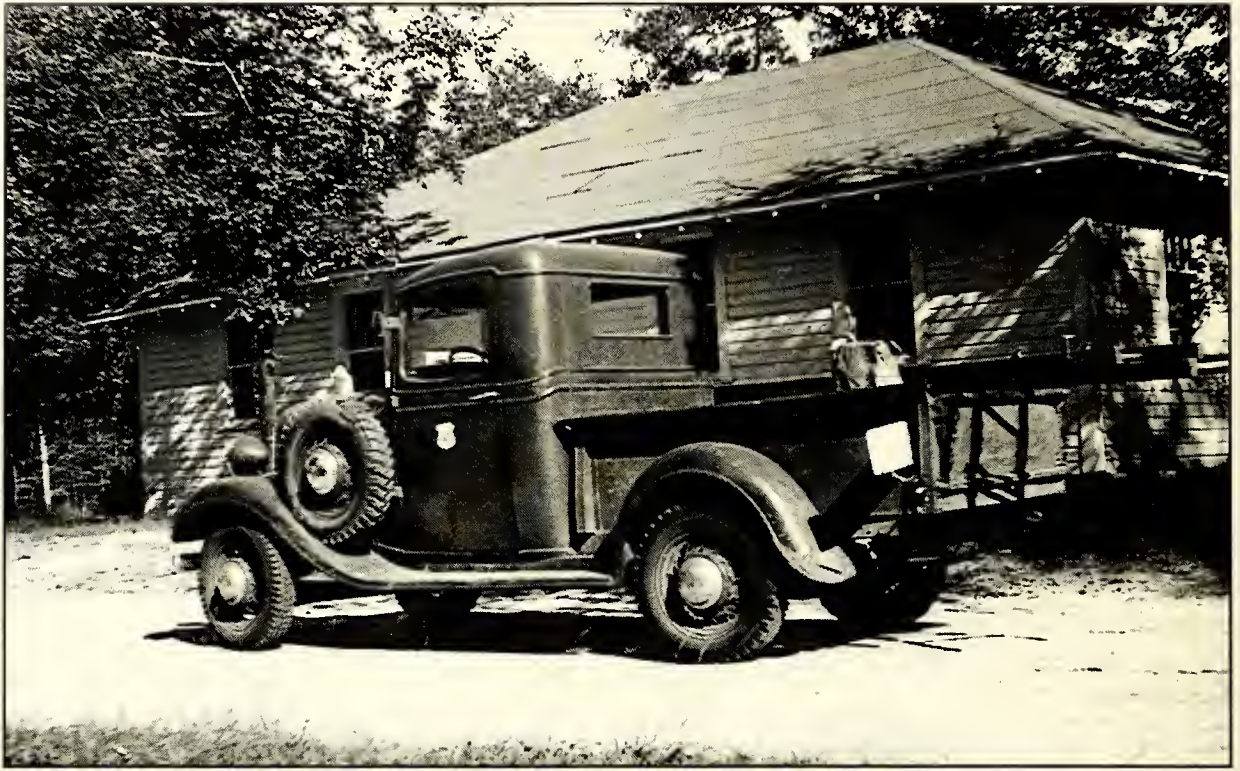


Figure 15. The temporary museum at Moore's Creek, circa 1950

pound swivel gun and a 1748 two-pound cast iron cannon. These cannon marked the park's first exhibit of authentic Revolutionary War artifacts. Throughout the 1940s, the park's efforts to interpret the battleground were handicapped by the lack of permanent exhibits and appropriate facilities. A 1949 museum prospectus specifically identified the need for permanent exhibit and storage space for artifacts.⁴

THE IMPACT OF MISSION 66 ON INTERPRETATION

As part of Moore's Creek NMP's planning for Mission 66 development, a prospectus was prepared for a proposed visitor center and museum in 1953. It maintained that a visitor center was crucial for full implementation of the interpretive program at the park. Containing pictures, maps, and objects, the visitor center would serve as an orientation for the battleground. Visitors would then proceed to a self-guided trail leading through the earthworks to the Patriot Monument, past the two cannon to the Negro Head Point Road causeway, and to the Battle of Moore's Creek Bridge Monument where an audio station would be located. The trail would then proceed along the historic road causeway past the earthworks. A wayside exhibit would be located along this portion of the trail.⁵

The vision of a new visitor center and corresponding interpretive program was delayed until the arrival of Mission 66 funding in 1958. Meanwhile, park staff continued to improve the existing interpretive program. In March 1954, a new wayside exhibit was installed, and a self-guided trail was laid out the following month. However, shortage of staff and lack of proper facilities continued

to hamper interpretive efforts. Interpretation was especially difficult at the entrance since it was only one hundred feet from the center of Highway 210.⁶

Completion of the visitor center and museum in 1958 finally allowed installation of permanent exhibits. By 1961, there were displays about North Carolina's settlement, the pre-Revolutionary War history of the area, and the Battle of Moores Creek Bridge and its aftermath. The displays featured period artifacts of various ethnic groups in colonial North Carolina, including the Scottish Highlanders. An experimental electric campaign map was set up; a diorama was planned for installation in 1962. During this same time, several area residents urged the park to display a chair associated with Mary Slocumb in the visitor center museum. Superintendent Ford opposed the display in an effort to distance the park from the legend of Slocumb's ride. To support Ford's position, Park Historian S. Michael Hubbell conducted historical research that essentially discredited the Slocumb story. In addition to displays, the Eastern National Park and Monument Association soon established a sales area in the visitor center, beginning its involvement in what would become a number of park endeavors in the ensuing decades. The museum was supplemented by new wayside exhibits on the battleground and an audio station at the bridge site. The interpretive program was now far more comprehensive than at any previous time.⁷

Additions to the interpretive program continued to be made throughout the remainder of the 1960s. In 1966, the park initiated year-round use of its audio program, which had been relocated to the visitor center for four months of the year. The MCBA assisted by printing one-page handouts. Roving personal interpretation was sometimes offered, but limited staffing usually hampered this service. In fact, visitor center hours, picnic area availability, and the number of talks offered were reduced due to staff limitations in 1967.⁸

NEW INTERPRETIVE DIRECTIONS AFTER MISSION 66

Interpretive Planning

The 1969 Moores Creek NMP Master Plan outlined the themes and direction of the park's interpretive program. The themes were defined as the clash of loyalties and cultural backgrounds that created factions ready for battle, the military campaign and troop movements that led to and included the battle, and the results of the battle. The causes and results of the battle were to be presented in the visitor center, while the battle itself was to be interpreted on the battleground.⁹

In addition to the guidelines of the master plan, Regional Interpretive Specialist Donald Robinson made recommendations following his visit to the park in 1970. He suggested that the park prepare a historical handbook, clear the area along the creek between the two cannon and the bridge, replace the audio station at the cannon position, and seek additional permanent staff positions.¹⁰

A long-range interpretive planning session took place in August 1997 with John Beck from the Southeast Support Office serving as meeting facilitator and plan author. The resulting plan called for adaptive reuse of the old restrooms to enlarge the visitor center museum, new exhibits, a new audiovisual presentation, and most significantly, planking on the reconstructed bridge crossing Moores Creek. Since it has long been accepted that the exact bridge design will probably never be known, it was determined that the bridge is most effectively interpreted with a wayside exhibit, while the battle story is interpreted best when visitors can retrace the Loyalist march across the bridge.¹¹

The American Revolution Bicentennial

In 1972, plans to renovate the visitor center took shape in preparation for the American Revolution Bicentennial. Completed in 1974, the remodeled visitor center featured a new thirteen-panel display, an audiovisual slide program, a diorama, and a collection of restored period weapons. The new exhibits emphasized the background of the colonial era, events leading up to the battle, the battle and its aftermath, and period weapons and equipment. Other preparations included various projects in cooperation with the North Carolina and Pender County Bicentennial Committees, the MCBA, the Pender County Historical Society, and the Pender County Centennial Committee. One project was a slide program developed by park staff and presented off-site to civic and church groups. This program highlighted NPS Bicentennial activities with special emphasis on parks set aside as Bicentennial showcases.¹²

Living History

One way in which the NPS broadened its interpretive focus after Mission 66 was through living history. Although critics charge that living history sanitizes the past, especially at battlefields, supporters view it as a valuable technique to increase visitor interest and make history more tangible. Living history interpretation in the NPS began with weapon firing demonstrations at Chickamauga and Chattanooga NMP and Antietam NB in 1961. The first military living history demonstrations by interpreters in period costume occurred at Fort Davis NHS in 1965. With the strong backing of NPS Director George B. Hartzog, Jr., living history programs became a standard part of interpretation at national battlefields and other historical parks during the late 1960s and early 1970s. By 1974, over one hundred national parks had initiated living history programs, including Moores Creek.¹³

Moores Creek's first living history program began in 1972 and included an interpreter dressed in a Patriot uniform at a simulated camp on summer weekends. At other times during the year, weapon demonstrations were conducted. Although rather basic, the living history program was successful in generating visitor interest. In 1973, the program was expanded with the addition of a Scottish Highlander component. Interpreters dressed in period costume walked the battleground playing bagpipes and demonstrating battle-period weapons. Patriot interpreters demonstrated the use of the Brown Bess musket. The program also added the North Carolina Minuteman, a costumed interpreter that visited schools in New Hanover, Brunswick, Pender, Duplin, and Onslow Counties. At the park, costumed interpreters staged military camp scenes and demonstrations. Interpreters received training at a "military arts camp of instruction" that was first held in 1974. During the 1980s and 1990s, the park continued its summer living history programs and expanded its outreach programs to local schools and community groups.¹⁴

Environmental Education

During the 1960s, NPS interpretive policies were also directed towards environmental education. Environmental issues received significant national attention with the passage of several landmark bills, including the 1969 National Environmental Policy Act. Under the leadership of Director Hartzog, NPS policy leaders showed increasing interest in developing study areas at parks to educate the public on the environment. Between 1968 and 1975, the NPS created an office of environmental education at the Washington headquarters, developed environmental study areas at eighty parks, and initiated environmental programs for schools.¹⁵



Figure 16. Military living history reenactors at Moores Creek, 1998

By 1972, environmental education became a priority at Moores Creek. That year park staff contacted the Pender County school system and other organizations about the possibility of a cooperative venture. In addition, the park prepared a handbook and guide for teachers who wished to take advantage of the environmental study area and trail that were developed in the park. Representatives from the NPS, the Pender Academy, and the Soil Conservation Service formed a steering committee to develop a workshop designed for teachers. The stated purpose was to develop environmental awareness among students through outdoor classrooms.¹⁶ In addition, the park began showing a variety of films on the environment, national parks, natural resources, and related subjects in Patriots Hall on Thursday and Saturday evenings. Reserved exclusively for local residents, this program proved to be quite popular.¹⁷ However, momentum slowed as the approaching Bicentennial shifted attention away from environmental education to historical interpretation in time for the 1976 celebration.

In an effort to combine historical and environmental interpretation, Park Historian Terry Maze prepared a conceptual plan for the Tarheel Trail in 1981. King had first proposed a nature trail in 1939, but the idea was slow to develop until construction of a trail finally took place in 1975. Originally called the Colonial Nature Trail, it consisted of a hard surface of soil cement just over one quarter of a mile looping through the wooded area at the southeast corner of the park. Maze renewed King's idea to use this trail to tell the story of the naval stores industry and its significant role in the history of the region. The wayside exhibit plan was completed in 1979, and three years later, a contract was awarded to Miles Higgins of Wilmington to produce eighteen line drawings

for use on the thirteen trail waysides. Installed in 1982, the exhibits were designed by Permaloy Systems of Salt Lake City, Utah.¹⁸

By the early 1980s, the environmental education focus within the NPS had lost momentum. The notion of historical parks educating the public on environmental issues rather than focusing on history was always controversial within the agency. By the early 1980s, NPS Director Russell E. Dickenson was steering the service's interpretive programs away from environmental education, especially at the historical parks.¹⁹

New Interpretive Programs and Facilities

While the environmental education emphasis faded, Moore's Creek continued outreach efforts for school children. Between 1978 and 1980, the park developed a well-planned program with eighteenth-century games that acquainted students with the hardships of colonial life. By taking advantage of authority to fund the transportation of school children, the park was able to arrange field trips for 750 students in 1980. During the same year, the park prepared a children's brochure and distributed forty-eight hundred copies to local teachers to assist them with preparing for park visits.²⁰

Other additions were made to the interpretive program during the 1980s. In 1982, two manikins, one dressed as a Patriot and the other a Loyalist, were put on display in the visitor center museum. The following year, two interpretive signs were installed along the History Trail. One sign was placed next to the Stage Road Monument; the other sign interpreted the partially reconstructed earthworks. In 1986, the interpretive budget suffered a large cut, but the staff still managed to double the number of programs offered. Financed through a cooperative venture with eleven organizations, the staff was able to produce a historical handbook as a sales item that year.²¹

In 1989, the west side of Moore's Creek was opened to visitors after construction of a 315-foot boardwalk and eighty-foot bridge. Both projects were recommended in the 1969 master plan and the 1972 DCP. Completed in eleven days, the boardwalk was a volunteer project of Fort Bragg's 37th Engineer Brigade, which donated all the labor. Utilizing fee enhancement funds, the park added two wayside exhibits with information about the area's natural history.²²

With help from the MCBA, off-site rack cards were printed and distributed to welcome centers and tourist attractions within a 150-mile radius of the park. In 1992, a television and video cassette player with closed caption capabilities were purchased to show video programs in the visitor center. Two years later, the park began showing its new video, *The Battle of Moore's Creek*. This program proved to be an excellent orientation to the park and its historical significance.²³

In 1996, park staff authored two new interpretive brochures, one about naval stores and the other concerning the Halifax Resolves. A new teacher's guide was developed with some assistance from Pender County schools. Replacement of the History Trail wayside exhibits began in 1998 with Paul Singer Design of New York City as the contractor. The plan included eleven new exhibits. A design study was also undertaken in that same year to evaluate structural and architectural changes needed to adaptively reuse the old restroom area as part of the visitor center museum. An architect from the Denver Service Center and an exhibit planner from the Harpers Ferry Center produced a design and production cost estimate.²⁴

NOTES

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CHAPTER FIVE

RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION AT MOORES CREEK

CULTURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Through the years, the diverse cultural resources of Moores Creek have undergone various levels of documentation, preservation, and restoration. The park's physical size belies its abundance of cultural resources. Historic structures and features at the park include the partially reconstructed Negro Head Point Road causeway and earthworks, the six monuments erected between 1857 and 1931, the headstones at the graves of Mary and Ezekiel Slocumb, and two property boundary markers placed by the MCMA. In addition, the park contains nine known archeological features, including the battlefield, the savannah, the historic bridge site, the Negro Head Point Road site, the site of the earthworks, four tar kiln sites of unknown date, and the remains of a twentieth-century structure.¹ The most complex resource is the landscape, which has evolved from the swampy 1776 battle setting to a commemorative park setting. Each of these cultural resources continues to present new challenges to park managers.²

Like all NPS units, Moores Creek was listed on the National Register of Historic Places with enactment of the National Historic Preservation Act on October 15, 1966.³ However, no formal National Register documentation was completed for over a decade. Prepared by Superintendent Raymond L. Ives between 1975 and 1976, official National Register documentation for the park was approved by the keeper of the register in November 1977. Ives's documentation identified the earthworks, the historic road causeway, and the six monuments as contributing elements to the park's significance.⁴ In February 1987, the NPS approved a boundary increase written by Superintendent Boyles the previous year. This action extended the boundary identified in the National Register documentation to include lands acquired by the park between 1974 and 1982.⁵ Another amendment to the National Register listing was approved in June 1996. In an attempt to clearly delineate significant park resources, this amendment, prepared by the Southeast Support Office, cited the two MCMA boundary markers as contributing elements to the park. The amendment designated the earthworks as noncontributing since they constitute neither the original earthworks nor a full reconstruction. However, because the ground beneath the earthworks may contain

significant archeological data, the amendment cited the location of the earthworks as contributing for archeological potential. In essence, the amendment argued for the integrity of the site as a commemorative landscape rather than as an actual Revolutionary War battlefield landscape.⁶

In addition to listing on the National Register, the park's historic structures were documented through the List of Classified Structures (LCS) program, an NPS survey and inventory that documents National Register-eligible resources in the parks. The LCS for Moores Creek was originally conducted in 1975 by Southeast Regional Office staff and included the earthworks, the Negro Head Point Road causeway, and the six monuments. An updating of the LCS by Southeast Regional Office staff in 1995 added the Slocumb headstones and the MCMA boundary markers.⁷

Although not initially considered cultural resources, the monuments erected at the battleground were eventually given that recognition. Consequently, their preservation was acknowledged as a legitimate management responsibility, and this prompted the park to arrange for a background study of the monuments in 1989. Conducted by an intern from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, this study provided comprehensive information on each monument, including original appearances and locations, and historical information on adjoining fences and plantings.⁸ In 1993, historical architects from the Southeast Regional Office were invited to inspect the monuments and recommend proper maintenance actions. As a result of this effort, the monuments were subsequently cleaned using appropriate methods and procedures were devised for quarterly inspections and yearly cleanings.⁹ In 1995, based on the monuments background study, the park restored the Patriot Monument to its original appearance by reinstalling the ornamental iron fencing and decorative plantings. In some ways, the park's management philosophy with regard to the monuments had come full circle. After being erected as part of a commemorative landscape, the monuments came to be seen as intrusions when the park removed the surrounding fencing and plantings during the 1930s and 1940s. By the 1990s, the park began viewing the monuments and their surroundings as significant in their own right and as important components of the commemorative history of the battleground.¹⁰

Archeology at the park has occurred sporadically through the years. Initial work was conducted by NPS Archeologist Thor Borresen during King's attempt to restore the earthworks in the 1930s. Borresen was largely successful in determining the original dimensions of the earthworks, thereby providing valuable information for any earthworks reconstruction attempts. In August 1958, a metal detector survey of the entire park was conducted by John W. Griffin. Since only a few eighteenth-century artifacts were found, Griffin recommended dredging Moores Creek in an effort to find additional artifacts. However, the park never acted on his suggestion. In 1973, John W. Walker of the Southeast Archeological Center (SEAC) performed a pedestrian survey of the area where Highway 210 was to be relocated. Two years later, he opened the cornerstone of the Patriot Monument. In 1974, Timothy Thompson of the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources investigated the earthworks, but found no eighteenth-century artifacts. During the same year, an archeological team from the same agency planned an underwater survey of the creek at the historic bridge site, but the survey was canceled due to equipment problems.¹¹

During the 1980s, archeological investigations at Moores Creek were undertaken to provide information on the historic bridge in preparation for the bridge's reconstruction. A survey of the creek using magnetometric remote sensing to locate bridge remains was performed in 1983 by a team led by David M. Brewer of SEAC. The survey was unsuccessful in discovering any remains from the 1776 bridge, although remains from the 1931 bridge were found. In 1984, further



Figure 17. An archeological investigation at Moores Creek during the 1970s

archeological surveys, performed by Greg Komara, Travis Gray, and Alan Cooper, investigated the west bank of Moores Creek, a tar kiln site on newly acquired property, and the part of the historic causeway where Highway 210 was to be relocated. However, results of the survey were inconclusive. Three years later, the park again tried unsuccessfully to find remains of the historic bridge with Tom Hargrove's archeological survey.¹²

During the summer of 1994, a team of SEAC archeologists led by John Cornelison and Brewer undertook the first archeological survey that included all NPS property at the park. The primary goal was to discover new information on the 1776 battle scene—a goal that the archeologists achieved with several important findings. In addition to revealing the height of the battle-period earthworks, the investigation confirmed that eighty percent of the partially reconstructed earthworks matched the location of the original earthworks. Remains of a campfire built on the eve of the battle were located near the earthworks. The team dug a trench through the historic road causeway in order to trace its evolution over time. Besides new information on the battle scene and landscape changes, the survey located a number of artifacts, including a musket ball, a metal box, and nails.¹³

Cultural landscape management at the park has often been directed at the accomplishment of more than one goal. Many of the planting efforts under natural resources management have been undertaken to restore the battle-period appearance of the site's cultural landscape. The earliest example of such efforts was when the NPS began removing the MCMA's exotic plantings around

the monuments and along the park roads during the 1930s. Native trees and shrubs were planted in their place. In 1972, the fields of fire between the two cannon and the bridge site were cleared of brush and other screening vegetation in the belief that this would have been done in preparation for the battle. These efforts were undertaken without a comprehensive plan for cultural landscape restoration and management.¹⁴

In 1985, the park contracted for the first comprehensive study to compare and contrast the historic plant community patterns with the park's current natural features. The study recommended establishing the original creek channel configuration to restore wetland communities, continuing maintenance of the savannah area around the earthworks, allowing the revegetation of the pine ridge behind the earthworks, and planting long leaf pines throughout the open meadow east of the park entrance.¹⁵ The park took several steps to implement the recommendations of the study, beginning with the planting of hundreds of long leaf pines in 1985, 1991, 1993, and 1996. In accordance with the recommendation to maintain the savannah, the park began an annual prescribed burn program in 1988. As part of this program, the savannah was burned in an attempt to reduce blackberry and tree growth. Although this effort was largely successful, it was unable to restore the historic wetlands setting due to decades of drainage activities at the park. In addition, the two wooded acres around the Tarheel Trail were burned annually to reduce fuels and ticks.¹⁶

In 1994, Moores Creek undertook a Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI), a relatively new NPS management emphasis that emerged during the 1990s with a focus on park historic landscapes. The three-stage CLI process included an inventory of current conditions and recommendations for alterations to restore landscapes to their historic appearance. Darrel Morrison, a landscape architect from the University of Georgia, conducted the field work and compiled a draft CLI for the first level of the program. In 1997, this draft was revised and finalized by staff from the Southeast Support Office. The CLI briefly outlined the historic vegetation patterns and divided the park into five zones, including swamp woodlands, transitional wetlands, savannah, upland pine woodlands, and open meadows and maintained facility areas. Morrison recommended the restoration of the savannah since drainage efforts had decreased its natural and historic wetness. In coordination with the NPS Water Resources Division, the park began a hydrologic study of the savannah by installing monitoring wells during the summer of 1996. The purpose of this study was to determine the feasibility of restoring the wetness of the savannah area. In addition, the park received funding in 1997 for a cultural landscape report to address cultural landscape management recommendations in more detail.¹⁷

In 1994, the park prepared a resources management plan to provide a unified, cohesive approach to the management of its varied cultural resources. The plan identified fundamental needs of the program and recommended projects necessary to achieve and maintain the park's ultimate preservation objectives. Among the plan's priorities were the continued preservation of the earthworks, the preparation of a historic landscape management plan, the development of a preservation maintenance plan for the monuments, and the completion of an archeological survey and base map for the entire park acreage.¹⁸ As part of the 1997 GPRA strategic planning process, the park envisioned eventually restoring six disturbed acres, including the former Highway 210 roadbed and the Tarheel Trail.¹⁹



Figure 18. Much of the cultural and natural resources management at Moores Creek has dealt with restoring the park to its battle-period appearance by removing the commemorative landscape installed by the MCMA as seen in this circa 1935 view of the Heroic Women Monument.

NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Although Moores Creek NMP was established in 1926 for its historical significance, the management of the park's natural resources has long been an important concern of the NPS. Early park staff documented the flora and fauna of the site along with gathering information on the park's historical significance. In 1936, nine varieties of oak trees, two of cypress, two of hickory, two of pine, and three of gum were identified. During the same year, the venus flytrap was first reported as being present in the park. Although this plant was not native to the park, it was known to grow in the area. Other plants identified were the Carolina maple, holly, persimmon, wild olive, sassafras, sycamore, willow, white ash, dogwood, huckleberry, spider lily, pitcher plant, butterwort, and swamp orchid.²⁰

Early attempts to protect the park's flora from insect infestation usually consisted of spraying. Lead arsenate was used to combat walnut caterpillars that infested oak and hickory trees. For trees with webworms, affected branches were cut and burned. In addition, fire was sometimes employed to combat destructive insects.²¹ In the 1930s, wildlife in the park consisted of squirrels, wild turkeys, quail, and an occasional bear. By 1938, fifty bird species had been identified. Prohibitions against hunting within park boundaries allowed the battleground to become a bird sanctuary.²²

In addition to naturally occurring plants, park staff undertook a reforestation effort in 1937, resulting in the planting of ten juniper, eight red cedar, ten dogwood, ten long leaf pine, six Christmas holly, six yellow poplar, and fifteen flowering ash trees. Although there was no plan or design for this planting, care was taken to place each variety in its natural environment. The regional associate

wildlife technician suggested further planting of trees and shrubs to encourage birds and animals to move into the park. To further promote reforestation, park staff decided to reduce mowing of the battleground, except around buildings, monuments, road shoulders, the picnic area, and the earthworks.²³ Due to the park's forested nature, fire protection played an important part in the natural resources management program during the 1930s. A fire lane was cut and maintained along the park's perimeter to protect against outside fires. Fires that happened to jump the lane or the creek were quickly suppressed.²⁴

Numerous studies have been conducted through the years to document the number and types of flora and fauna in the park. Between 1937 and 1938, a wildlife study and a bird checklist were completed. In 1940, a similar checklist was prepared for flowering plants. The following year, the park superintendent reported that 275 species of flora other than trees and over fifty varieties of trees had been identified. Documentation efforts continued sporadically until 1982 when Dr. David Sieren, a professor in the botany department of the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, completed the first comprehensive floristic study of the park's vascular plants. Dr. Sieren identified 108 families, 297 genera, and 539 species.²⁵

Until more recently, attempts to restore the park's natural environment to some resemblance of its historic appearance lacked a coherent approach. In some cases, new plantings were designed to accomplish a management objective rather than to restore the historic scene. In 1957 for example, one hundred southern pine seedlings were planted to mark the park boundary in the vicinity of the old picnic grounds. In 1972, the regional resources management specialist recommended the use of low growing native thorny plants to control traffic that drifted off of established trails. Areas without grass were routinely seeded to improve their appearance or to facilitate erosion control. As previously mentioned, management of the park's natural resources in the context of cultural landscape considerations became a major planning objective during the 1980s and 1990s.²⁶

In 1997, the NPS Water Resources Division finished a water quality analysis for the creek, and the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission completed a study revealing that no threatened or endangered mussels inhabited Moores Creek. Later that year, the park set a five-year strategic planning goal to increase the natural resources inventory by five percent with the addition of an aquatic wildlife survey.²⁷

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Due primarily to Moores Creek's rural setting, law enforcement activity has never been a major issue at the park. Most incidents during the first four decades of NPS management concerned drunk drivers, speeding violators, minor vandalism, and hunting violations. Most incidents were handled with verbal warnings until an incident reporting system was established in 1972.²⁸ By the 1970s, increased visitation mandated upgrades to the park's law enforcement program. In 1974, equipment was purchased to bring the park up to minimum standards. Two years later, the park hired its first full-time law enforcement ranger. In September 1976, the law enforcement ranger assisted members of the U.S. Customs Service, local narcotics officers, and personnel from two county sheriff's departments with a marijuana arrest in the park.²⁹

Despite an occasional incident, law enforcement was a minor concern at Moores Creek during the 1970s. Enforcement consisted mainly of patrolling abandoned buildings on newly acquired property and occasionally uncovering marijuana plants for eradication. Consequently, the law

enforcement position was reclassified as a park technician position in 1979. Without a commissioned ranger on staff, employees who lived on site were responsible for building security and grounds patrol. In addition, an alarm system was installed in the visitor center in 1981.³⁰

During the 1980s, incidents of vandalism began to increase at the park. As a result, the park installed additional signs prohibiting illegal activities. In July 1984, concurrent jurisdiction with state and local law enforcement authorities became effective. Since that date, the Pender County Sheriff's Department has assisted in the protection of park resources.³¹

Further improvements in law enforcement and safety measures occurred during the 1990s. In 1991, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the park and the Atkinson Volunteer Fire Department for structural fire fighting support within the park and wildfire suppression both within the park and on adjacent lands. In addition, a chain-link fence was erected along portions of the western boundary in 1996 to prevent casual entry from the old Highway 210 remnant outside the park.³²

NOTES

¹ GPRA, 5.

² Moores Creek National Battlefield, *Statement for Management* (National Park Service, 1994), 1-22.

³ National Register of Historic Places TELNET database [<http://www.nr.nps.gov/nrishome.htm>], October 1997.

⁴ Raymond L. Ives, *Moores Creek National Military Park*, National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form for Federal Properties, National Register Files, Cultural Resources Stewardship Division, Southeast Regional Office, National Park Service, Atlanta; National Register of Historic Places TELNET database [<http://www.nr.nps.gov/nrishome.htm>], October 1997.

⁵ Fred Boyles, *Moores Creek National Battlefield*, National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form for Federal Properties, National Register Files; National Register of Historic Places TELNET database [<http://www.nr.nps.gov/nrishome.htm>], October 1997.

⁶ Robert W. Blythe, *Moores Creek National Battlefield*, National Register of Historic Places Amendment, National Register Files; National Register of Historic Places TELNET database [<http://www.nr.nps.gov/nrishome.htm>], October 1997.

⁷ List of Classified Structures Files, Cultural Resources Stewardship Division, Southeast Regional Office, National Park Service, Atlanta.

⁸ Annual Report, 1989; Jamie Blankenship, *Background Study of Fences and Monuments at Moores Creek NB* (National Park Service, 1989), 1-13.

⁹ Southeast Regional Office, National Park Service, *Completion Report, Moores Creek National Battlefield, Cleaning and Preservation of Six Monuments* (Atlanta: National Park Service, 1993), 1-10.

¹⁰ Assessment of Actions Having an Effect on Cultural Resources, MOCR 91-01, Section 106 Files, Cultural Resources Stewardship Division, Southeast Regional Office, National Park Service, Atlanta; Darrel Morrison and Lucy Lawliss, Cultural Landscape Inventory, Moore's Creek National Battlefield (National Park Service, 1997), 15, Cultural Landscape Inventory Files, Cultural Resources Stewardship Division, Southeast Regional Office, National Park Service, Atlanta.

¹¹ Thor Borresen, *Report on Inspection of Earthwork Restoration and Repair*, 1940; Annual Reports, 1938, 1974.

¹² David M. Brewer, *Report on an Underwater Archeological Survey and Testing of Moore's Creek National Battlefield* (Tallahassee, Florida: Southeast Archeological Center, 1983), 1-13; Annual Reports, 1984, 1987.

¹³ Patrick Thomas, "Archaeologists make key finds at Moore's Creek," *Pender Post*, July 20, 1994, 1.

¹⁴ Monthly Report, September 1942; Annual Report, 1972.

¹⁵ Gerald R. McCrain and Barbara H. Church, *An Analysis of Past and Present Plant Community Patterns in Moore's Creek National Battlefield* (Resource Management Company, 1985), 42-47.

¹⁶ Annual Reports, 1985, 1989, 1991, 1993.

¹⁷ Morrison, 1-25; Chief, Cultural Resources, Southeast Support Office, to Superintendent, March 21, 1997, Cultural Landscape Inventory Files; Superintendent to Chief, Cultural Resources, Southeast Support Office, June 12, 1997, Cultural Landscape Inventory Files.

¹⁸ *Statement for Management*, 1-22.

¹⁹ GPRA, 3-5.

²⁰ Monthly Reports, April-May, October-November 1936; Superintendent to Coordinating Superintendent, February 8, 1945, MAR, Box 103.

²¹ Superintendent to Director, October 29, 1937, *Historical Papers*, Vol. 2; Monthly Reports, June, August-September 1937.

²² Annual Reports, 1938, 1942; Monthly Report, September 1941.

²³ Annual Report, 1937; O.B. Taylor, Associate Wildlife Technician, to Coordinating Superintendent, August 19, 1937, MAR, Box 103; Monthly Report, November 1937; Coordinating Superintendent to Regional Director, May 23, 1944, MAR, Box 104.

²⁴ Monthly Reports, May, October 1937; June 1938; February 1951.

²⁵ Annual Reports, 1939-1941, 1980, 1982.

²⁶ Monthly Report, December 1957; Annual Reports, 1965, 1974-1975; Resource Management Specialist to Regional Director, June 5, 1972, *Historical Papers*, Vol. 11.

²⁷ Water Resources Division, *Baseline Water Quality Data Inventory and Analysis, Moore's Creek National Battlefield* (Washington: National Park Service, 1997), v-vii; GPRA, 6.

²⁸ Monthly Reports, May, November 1937; February, July, November 1951; November 1953; April 1956; December 1957; September 1968; February 1969; Annual Report, 1972.

²⁹ Annual Reports, 1973-1976.

³⁰ Annual Reports, 1978-1979, 1981-1982.

³¹ Annual Report, 1984; Childress, July 22, 1998.

³² Annual Report, 1991; Childress, July 22, 1998.

CONCLUSION

At the bridge across Moores Creek on February 27, 1776, Patriot militia defeated a Loyalist army marching to rendezvous with a British fleet on the coast of North Carolina. This early Patriot victory in the southern colonies helped delay a full-scale British invasion of the region for several years. Recognizing the significance of the battleground, the local community initiated the commemorative history of the site in 1856 with an anniversary celebration and a monument drive. In 1897, the State of North Carolina purchased the site and created the Moores Creek Monumental Association as a private organization to develop and maintain the battleground as a public park. Federal involvement began in 1926 with the creation of the Moores Creek National Military Park. After a brief time of management by the War Department, the NPS took over the battlefield in 1933.

During its sixty-five years of management at Moores Creek NB, the NPS has dramatically transformed the park while confronting a number of complex challenges. Management issues of the past—expansion, facility upgrades, resource protection, landscape restoration, reconstruction policy, limited funding and staffing, and competition for diminishing agency resources—will undoubtedly resurface in the future. With the emergence of new challenges, such as the growing diversification of the American public, development and land use pressures, and changes in park operating funds, managers at Moores Creek NB may look increasingly to decisions of the past in order to formulate creative solutions for the future. It is hoped that the research presented in this report, and the context in which it has been presented, will help guide the management of Moores Creek NB for many years to come.

APPENDIX ONE

A CHRONOLOGY FOR MOORES CREEK NMP/NB

- 1776 On February 27, a force of eleven hundred Patriots defeated a force of sixteen hundred Highlander Loyalists in the Battle of Moores Creek Bridge.
- 1791 The land encompassing the Moores Creek battleground was granted by patent to John Jones, the first private owner of the site.
- 1856 *The Fayetteville Observer* printed an article deploring the Moores Creek battleground's neglect. Inspired by the article, a group of local citizens resolved to hold an anniversary observance at the battleground on February 27.
- 1857 On January 10, committees were appointed for New Hanover, Duplin, Lenoir, Wayne, Cumberland, Bladen, Columbus, and Brunswick Counties to solicit funds for a monument to the Patriots who fought in the battle. By the time of the second anniversary celebration on February 27, enough money had been raised to lay the Patriot Monument's cornerstone.
- 1897 The North Carolina General Assembly authorized the purchase of no more than twenty acres to be set aside as a public park in commemoration of the battle.
- 1899 The General Assembly incorporated the MCMA on March 7 to administer the park at the battleground.
- At its first meeting on July 4, the MCMA made plans for a picnic and celebration on August 17 and elected James F. Moore as its first president. A board of directors was empowered to clear the grounds and build a pavilion.
- 1904 Use of the historic Negro Head Point Road and Moores Creek Bridge was discontinued when the road was straightened and a new bridge was built upstream.
- 1905 The General Assembly approved an appropriation to keep the grounds cleared and erect a lodge to protect visitors from the weather.
- 1907 The General Assembly granted the MCMA the power to preserve order and protect persons and property. The General Assembly also appropriated funds to preserve, improve, protect, and enlarge the battleground.

- The Heroic Women of the Lower Cape Fear Monument, or Slocumb Monument, was erected.
- 1909** The Loyalist Monument was erected.
- 1911** The Stage Road Monument was erected.
- 1913** A monument was erected to the memory of the association's first president, James F. Moore, who had died in 1912.
- 1925** The General Assembly authorized the donation of the battleground to the federal government for use as a national military park.
- 1926** On June 2, President Calvin Coolidge signed into law a bill establishing Moore's Creek NMP. The deed to the property was conveyed to the United States on July 8; the War Department officially accepted responsibility for operating the park on August 23. George J. Moore, the second president of the MCMA, was appointed the first federal superintendent.
- 1928** Charles P. Moore was hired as caretaker for an annual salary and lodging.
- 1929** At the urging of the DAR, the bodies of Mary and Ezekiel Slocumb were moved from Mount Olive, North Carolina, to a new grave site at the base of the Heroic Women Monument. The reburial took place on September 20.
- 1931** The Battle of Moore's Creek Bridge Monument was erected with a text prepared by the Historical Section of the Army War College. In addition, a reconstructed bridge was built at the historic creek crossing.
- 1932** The War Department installed new entrance gates.
- 1933** Moore's Creek NMP was transferred from the War Department to the NPS within the Department of the Interior.
- 1935** Superintendent Moore retired. Charles P. Moore continued as caretaker and the park's only staff member.
- 1936** On December 1, Clyde B. King was appointed park superintendent.

- 1937** The park undertook its first extensive education program. King personally took charge of the program and gave 167 lectures to 15,825 grade school and high school students and teachers.
- A wildlife study was conducted.
- 1938** King completed the park's first master plan. He conducted a survey to identify those lands adjacent to the park that were desirable for inclusion; thirty-five acres were specified as being the minimum necessary for full development of the park.
- The park staff began compiling a bird checklist; fifty varieties of birds were identified.
- 1939** On December 13, King began repair of disturbed sections of the earthworks. He removed soil which had accumulated in the ditch and placed it in depressions in the earthworks caused by a park road.
- The park submitted a museum plan to the regional office in May. It featured exhibits about the Moores Creek campaign, the Revolutionary War in the South, the natural features of the park, and other national park areas.
- King enclosed the old dance pavilion and used the structure as a temporary museum. In May, the first exhibit, a map of the battle campaign, was placed on display.
- 1940** In June, the park prepared and printed its first information folder.
- On October 28, the park began receiving electric power from the Tide Water Power Company of Wilmington.
- The park staff prepared a checklist for flowering plants in the park.
- 1941** The superintendent reported that 275 species of flora other than trees and over fifty varieties of trees had been identified.
- 1942** King transferred to the Natchez Trace Parkway. He was replaced by Oswald E. Camp, who came from Kings Mountain NMP.
- 1943** On June 19, the park was made available to soldiers from nearby Camp Davis for a day-long outing; 650 people attended. In August, the 225th Searchlight Battalion visited the park; 550 people attended.
- The MCBA sponsored the first Easter service at the park in April.

On September 27, Congress passed legislation that authorized the acceptance of donated property to enlarge the park.

- 1945** The NPS removed the reconstructed bridge built by the War Department in 1931 because it was in danger of collapse.

The State of North Carolina agreed to buy land to enlarge the park.

In September, flooding forced Camp to move out of the superintendent's residence.

- 1946** The state began paving Highway 602.

- 1947** The General Assembly appropriated the funds necessary for land acquisition.

- 1948** The state purchased over twelve acres of land for donation to the park.

- 1949** Harry D. Goodson succeeded Camp as superintendent.

- 1950** On November 1, the paving of Highway 602 was completed, and it was dedicated as the Moore's Creek Battleground Highway on November 9.

- 1951** The transfer of the twelve acres from the State of North Carolina to the NPS took place during the 175th anniversary observance of the Battle of Moore's Creek Bridge.

- 1952** Highway 602 was renamed Highway 210 in January.

- 1954** News that Moore's Creek NMP was under consideration for possible removal from the national park system brought strong protests. Because of this opposition, the proposal was not pursued further by the NPS.

In April, the self-guiding tour trail was laid out.

- 1956** George C. Blake was appointed superintendent following Goodson's death.

Telephone service was extended to the park.

- 1957** One thousand southern pine seedlings were planted to mark the park boundary in the vicinity of the old picnic grounds.

- 1958** The Mission 66 program at Moores Creek NMP was inaugurated on March 9 when groundbreaking ceremonies were held for the building program at the park.
- In August, archeologist John W. Griffin used a metal detector within the earthworks and on the causeway in an attempt to locate artifacts for use in museum exhibits. Six bags of objects were recovered from the earthworks, including two iron fragments, a small brass or bronze buckle, and a lead fragment. Griffin recommended that the earthworks be excavated and that the creek be dredged.
- 1959** By January, the visitor center, an equipment storage building, and two employee residences had been completed as part of the Mission 66 building program at the park.
- James M. Ford became superintendent in February after Blake transferred to Hot Springs National Park.
- On July 1, Moores Creek NMP became an independent unit; the park superintendent no longer reported to the coordinating superintendent at Colonial National Historical Park.
- 1961** The first permanent exhibits were installed in the new visitor center. The displays featured artifacts representing the ethnic groups in North Carolina in 1776 and hand weapons of the period. The museum displays were supplemented by new wayside exhibits on the battleground and an audio station at the historic bridge site.
- 1962** The diorama was installed in the visitor center on August 7.
- 1964** Russell A. Gibbs succeeded Ford as superintendent.
- 1966** Patriots Hall was completed on March 30; it was dedicated on October 23.
- 1967** Visitor center hours and the number of interpretive programs offered were limited due to a lack of staff. The picnic area was closed on Mondays and Tuesdays.
- 1969** The Moores Creek NMP Master Plan was approved in January.
- John R. DeWeese succeeded Gibbs as superintendent.
- 1972** The DCP for the park was completed. It proposed the relocation of Highway 210 from the center of the park, a new entrance road, and a substantial reorientation of the park's layout.

The park began its first living history program. An interpreter, with replica uniform and equipment, was stationed in a simulated camp that was set up on summer weekends. The park also initiated an environmental education program and worked with the Pender County school system and other interested organizations.

A law enforcement incident reporting system was put into place for the first time.

Raymond Ives succeeded DeWeese as superintendent.

1973 The living history program was expanded with the addition of the Loyalist Highlanders. Interpreters, dressed in period costume, walked the grounds playing bagpipes and demonstrating Scottish arms.

1974 The Loyalist and Patriot Monuments were relocated as part of the implementation of the DCP, which called for a new interpretive trail.

On October 26, President Richard Nixon signed Public Law 93-4771, which authorized boundary changes. This made possible the acquisition of twelve acres west of the creek and twenty-one acres east of the visitor center for the relocation of Highway 210.

The visitor center was renovated with a thirteen-panel display and an audiovisual slide program added.

The first "military arts camp of instruction" was held to train the park's living history interpreters.

The NPS contracted with Timothy Thompson, of the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, to conduct extensive excavations of the earthworks.

1975 The Colonial Nature Trail was constructed. It was 0.28 miles long, hardsurfaced with soil cement, and looped through the wooded area in the southeast corner of the park.

1976 The law enforcement position was staffed through the entire year for the first time. On September 24, the ranger assisted members of the U.S. Customs Service, local narcotics officers, and two county sheriff departments with a marijuana arrest in the park.

- 1978** The U.S. Department of Agriculture's district conservationist investigated the causes of erosion of the causeway leading to the historic bridge site and made recommendations for correction. Most of the alternatives were expensive and carried some risk that additional damage would be done during implementation. The park ultimately decided to use rip-rap and additional ground cover to try to slow the erosion.

John W. Stockert succeeded Ives as superintendent.

- 1980** T.D. Eure Construction Company completed a contract for causeway stabilization on November 21.

The official name of the park was changed from Moores Creek National Military Park to Moores Creek National Battlefield on September 8.

- 1981** Park Historian Terry Maze prepared a conceptual plan for the Tarheel Trail based on King's idea that the trail should be used to tell the story of the naval stores industry in the region.

An alarm system was installed in the visitor center.

A total of 307 feet of the History Trail was raised by an average of one foot and soil cementing was done by Carolina Contractors of Wilmington. The section raised began at the base of the Heroic Women Monument and continued across the savannah ditch to the Moore Monument.

- 1982** In condemnation proceedings between March 15 and 18, a court set the amount of money due to the owner of the land west of the creek.

Interpretive exhibits were installed along the Tarheel Trail.

Dr. David Sieren of the Botany Department of the University of North Carolina at Wilmington completed the first comprehensive floristic study of the vascular plants at Moores Creek NB. Dr. Sieren identified 108 families, 297 genera, and 539 species.

- 1983** SEAC conducted an underwater archeological survey and testing of the creekbed in order to locate and identify remains of the historic bridge. Remains of the 1931 reconstructed bridge were found, but no traces of the historic bridge were located.

- 1984** On July 27, concurrent jurisdiction with state and local law enforcement agencies became effective. On August 24, Patriots Hall was burglarized. This was only one of an increasing number of law enforcement incidents.
- 1985** The park staff planned and developed a program to restore the historic landscape by planting long leaf pines; one thousand seedlings were planted in accordance with a historic grounds study.
- Fred Boyles succeeded Stockert as superintendent; Stockert transferred to Fort Donelson NB.
- 1986** The North Carolina Department of Transportation awarded a contract for the relocation of Highway 210 to a newly acquired tract of land east of the visitor center.
- The park received funding from the Eastern National Park and Monument Association to conduct a study of the historic bridge in conjunction with the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Officer. This study resulted in information that was later translated into plans for a reconstructed bridge based on a “minimum of conjecture.”
- The park’s interpretive staff produced a historical handbook as a sales item.
- 1987** Archeological consultant Tom Hargrove was hired to search, once again, for evidence of the historic bridge; he found no evidence.
- 1988** The park began a prescribed burn program in an effort to maintain the savannah. As part of the program, the savannah was burned annually in an attempt to reduce blackberry and tree growth.
- 1989** A 315-foot boardwalk and eighty-foot bridge were constructed to provide access to the west side of the creek.
- A volunteer intern from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington completed a research report on the monuments at Moores Creek NB. This study documented the history of each monument and any alterations.
- 1990** Dusty Shultz succeeded Boyles as superintendent; Boyles transferred to Andersonville and Jimmy Carter National Historic Sites.

- 1992** A preservation crew from Cape Hatteras National Seashore began work on the reconstructed bridge on October 26 and completed it on November 2.
- A television and VCR were purchased so that video programs could be shown in the visitor center.
- 1993** The park began showing the new video, *The Battle of Moores Creek*.
- In October, Bob Davidson succeeded Shultz as superintendent; Shultz transferred to Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial.
- 1994** The park's resource management plan was approved.
- In June and July, SEAC archeologists conducted an archeological survey of all park property and made several important findings.
- In August, a new water treatment building was constructed.
- Davidson retired as superintendent on December 10. Moores Creek was subsequently placed under the administration of Fort Sumter National Monument Superintendent John Tucker.
- 1995** The ornamental iron fencing around the Patriot Monument was reconstructed.
- The picnic shelter was removed and replaced by a new one.
- 1997** The NPS Water Resources Division completed a water quality analysis for the park and released the findings in July. In addition, the North Carolina Division of Natural Resources determined that no threatened or endangered mussels were in Moores Creek.
- The park finalized its strategic plan for the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993.
- 1998** Construction of a new restroom just east of the visitor center was completed. Work was carried out by staff members from the park, Fort Sumter National Monument, and the Southeast Region.
- A long-range interpretive plan was finalized.

Programs for large groups, especially school and military groups, were moved to Patriots Hall.

Ann Childress became superintendent in January, reporting to Fort Sumter Superintendent John Tucker.

APPENDIX TWO

MOORES CREEK NMP/NB SUPERINTENDENTS

George J. Moore February 6, 1928 to August 10, 1933

Moores Creek NMP was transferred from the War Department to the NPS on August 10, 1933.

George J. Moore October 1, 1933 to October 15, 1935

Clyde B. King, acting October 21, 1935 to December 1, 1936

On March 15, 1936, Moores Creek NMP became part of a southern Revolutionary War group managed by Colonial National Historical Park. Moores Creek NMP's superintendent reported to a coordinating superintendent under this arrangement. On July 1, 1959, Moores Creek NMP was removed from this group and became an independent park again. Coordinating superintendents during this time included B. Floyd Flickinger and Jean C. Harrington.

Clyde B. King December 1, 1936 to January 15, 1942

Oswald E. Camp January 15, 1942 to January 31, 1949

Harry D. Goodson April 11, 1949 to December 17, 1955

George C. Blake April 8, 1956 to March 1, 1959

James M. Ford March 1, 1959 to April 11, 1964

Russell A. Gibbs August 2, 1964 to October 31, 1969

John R. DeWeese December 14, 1969 to June 30, 1972

Raymond L. Ives September 1, 1972 to October 22, 1977

John W. Stockert January 15, 1978 to February 2, 1985

Frederick H. Boyles May 19, 1985 to November 25, 1989

Dusty Shultz

February 11, 1990 to September 18, 1993

Robert E. Davidson

October 16, 1993 to December 10, 1994

After Davidson's retirement, Moores Creek NB was placed under the administration of the superintendent at Fort Sumter National Monument.

John Tucker

December 10, 1994 to January 5, 1998

In 1998, Moores Creek was provided funding for an on-site superintendent once again, although the park remained part of the Fort Sumter Group.

Ann Childress

January 6, 1998 to Present

APPENDIX THREE

MOORES CREEK NMP/NB ANNUAL VISITATION STATISTICS

<i>1926-1935 statistics unavailable</i>		1966	33,832
		1967	33,463
1936	4,187	1968	35,408
1937	4,725	1969	37,535
1938	6,428	1970	44,120
1939	5,008	1971	52,460
1940	3,768	1972	42,241
1941	4,412	1973	37,574
1942	2,700	1974	42,867
1943	5,773	1975	48,954
1944	3,342	1976	71,057
1945	3,501	1977	56,163
1946	4,031	1978	56,976
1947	3,818	1979	44,272
1948	4,974	1980	41,793
1949	8,783	1981	45,054
1950	12,648	1982	50,192
1951	17,545	1983	39,532
1952	18,194	1984	32,715
1953	18,864	1985	43,908
1954	21,737	1986	45,821
1955	22,611	1987	41,026
1956	26,188	1988	49,020
1957	28,093	1989	46,260
1958	30,001	1990	51,640
1959	31,165	1991	68,511
1960	24,440	1992	64,958
1961	20,578	1993	58,215
1962	25,679	1994	70,225
1963	27,052	1995	57,706
1964	27,968	1996	58,516
1965	31,930	1997	47,139

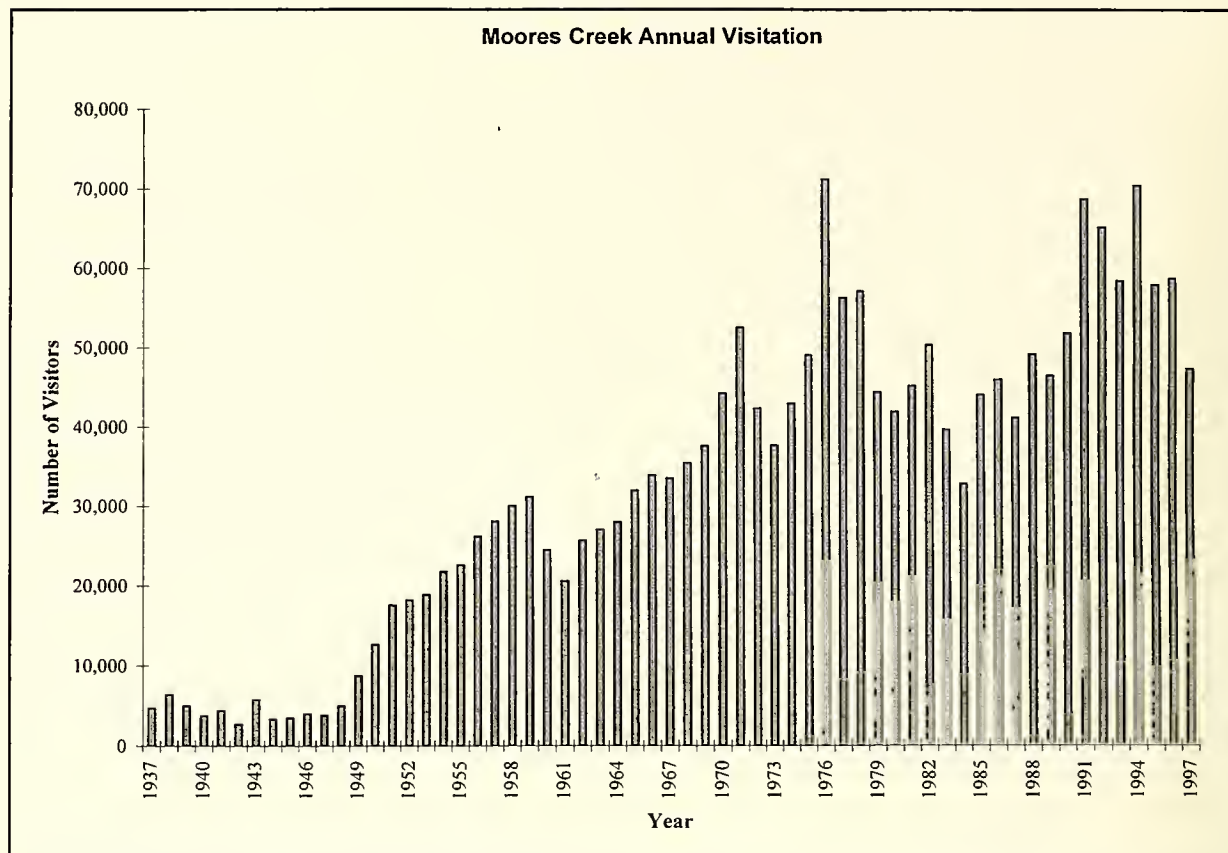


Figure 19. Visitation trends at Moores Creek, 1936-1998

APPENDIX FOUR

ACTS AND RESOLUTIONS OF THE NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

An act for the purchase of Moores Creek Battleground

Ratified March 9, 1897

An act to incorporate the Moores Creek Monumental Association

Ratified March 7, 1899

An act to prevent felling of trees in Moores Creek, Pender County

Ratified February 4, 1905

An act to appropriate and consolidate the annual appropriation of the Moores Creek Monumental Association

Ratified March 2, 1905

An act to empower the Moores Creek Monumental Association to preserve order and to protect persons and premises

Ratified February 1907

An act to make appropriations for State Institutions

Ratified March 11, 1907

An act to amend Chapter 262 of the Public Laws of 1907, increasing the annual appropriation to the Moores Creek Battleground Association from \$500 to \$1,000

Ratified August 23, 1924

An act authorizing the granting of title by the State of North Carolina to Moores Creek Battlefield, Pender County, North Carolina, to the Government of the United States

Ratified February 21, 1925

Resolution 31 calling attention of Congress to the significance of the Battle of Moores Creek Bridge in the War of the American Revolution, and requesting that Moores Creek battleground be erected and maintained by the Federal Government as a national park

Ratified February 27, 1925

An act to make an act of the General Assembly of 1925 authorizing the grant of title to the U.S. Government to Moores Creek battlefield in accordance with the requirements of said Government
Ratified February 26, 1927

An act to create a commission for the purpose of acquiring certain property adjoining the Moores Creek National Military Park, in Pender County, and appropriating \$500 therefor
Ratified April 5, 1947

An act to authorize the governor, with the approval of Council of State to convey to the United States of America, a tract of land purchased for Moores Creek National Military Park
Ratified March 27, 1951

An act to appropriate funds for the purchase of additional land at Moores Creek National Military Park
Ratified June 30, 1969

APPENDIX FIVE

FEDERAL LEGISLATION

An Act Authorizing the Secretary of War to donate two condemned cannon to Moores Creek Battle Ground Association, approved February 23, 1909 (35 Stat. 643)

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Secretary of War be, and he is hereby, authorized and directed to donate to Moores Creek Battle Ground Association, of Currie, North Carolina, two condemned bronze field pieces with their carriages and a suitable outfit of cannon balls which may not be needed in the service: *Provided,* That no expense shall be incurred by the United States in connection with the donation of the above-mentioned articles of ordnance property.

An Act To establish a national military park at the battle field of Moores Creek, North Carolina, approved June 2, 1926 (44 Stat. 684)

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That in order to preserve for historical and professional military study one of the most memorable battles of the Revolutionary War, the battle field of Moores Creek, in the State of North Carolina, is hereby declared to be a national military park whenever the title to the same shall have been acquired by the United States; that is to say, the area inclosed by the following lines:

Those tracts or parcels of land in the county of Pender, and State of North Carolina, more particularly described as follows:

First tract: Beginning at a stone at the run of Moores Creek, on the east bank of same, about twenty poles (in a straight line) above the new iron bridge, and running thence parallel to William Walker's line, south sixty-two and one-half degrees west eleven chains to a stake; thence south seven and one-half degrees east three and six-tenths chains to a stone at the south edge of said road south forty-six degrees east about five chains and eighty links to a stone; thence south thirty-seven and one-fourth degrees west fourteen chains and twelve links to a stone; thence north sixty-two and one-half degrees west ten chains and seventy-five links to a stone, a corner (4) of an eighty-acre tract which the parties of the first part conveyed to Governor D.L. Russell, for the purposes aforesaid, by a deed dated January, 1898, and recorded in Pender County; thence with the lines of said tract north thirty-nine and one-half degrees east thirteen chains and twenty-seven links to a stake, the third corner of the said eighty-acre tract; thence north fifty-one degrees west four chains to a stake about twenty feet from the old entrenchment (the second corner of the eighty-acre tract); thence up and with the run of said creek to the first station, containing twenty acres.

Second tract: Beginning at a sweet gum on the eastern edge of Moores Creek, running thence south forty-four degrees east two poles to a stake; thence south fifty-one degrees east four poles five links to a stake; thence south thirty-nine degrees west thirteen poles twenty-seven links to a stake; thence north fifty-one degrees west nine poles thirty-one links to a stake in the edge of Moores Creek; thence northerly with the creek to the beginning, containing eight acres more or less.

Third tract: Beginning at a cypress on the edge of the run of Moore's Creek about twenty feet from the west end of the old entrenchments and running thence in a line parallel to and ten feet distance from the outside or east edge of the old line of entrenchments in all the various courses of the same to a stake ten feet distant on the east side of the north end of said entrenchments; thence a direct line to the run of said Moore's Creek; thence down said creek to the beginning, containing two acres, be the same more or less (the intention is to include all lands now known and designated as Moore's Creek battlefield and now so recognized as such and owned by the State of North Carolina), together with all the privileges and appurtenances thereunto belonging.

The aforesaid tracts of land containing in the aggregate thirty acres, more or less, and being the property of the State of North Carolina, and the area thus inclosed shall be known as the Moore's Creek National Military Park.

SEC. 2. The establishment of the Moore's Creek National Military Park shall be carried forward under the control and direction of the Secretary of War, who is hereby authorized to receive from the State of North Carolina a deed of conveyance to the United States of all the lands belonging to the said State, embracing thirty acres, more or less, and described more particularly in the preceding section.

SEC. 3. That the affairs of the Moore's Creek National Military Park shall be subject to the supervision and direction of the Secretary of War, and it shall be the duty of the War Department, under the direction of the Secretary of War, to open or repair such roads as may be necessary to the purposes of the park, and to ascertain and mark with historical tablets or otherwise, as the Secretary of War may determine, all lines of battle of the troops engaged in the Battle of Moore's Creek, and other historical points of interest pertaining to the battle within the park or its vicinity; and the Secretary of War in establishing this military park is authorized to employ such labor and services and to obtain such supplies and material as may be considered best for the interest of the Government, and the Secretary of War shall make and enforce all needed regulations for the care of the park.

SEC. 4. It shall be lawful for any State that had troops engaged in the battle of Moore's Creek National Military Park, to enter upon the same for the purpose of ascertaining and marking the lines of battle of its troops engaged therein: *Provided*, That before any such lines are permanently designated the position of the lines and the proposed methods of marking them by monuments, tablets, or otherwise, shall be submitted to and approved by the Secretary of War; and all such lines, designs, and inscriptions for the same shall first receive the written approval of the Secretary of War.

SEC. 5. If any person shall, except by permission of the Secretary of War, destroy, deface, injure, or remove any monument, column, statues, memorial structures, or work of art, which shall be placed upon the grounds of the park by lawful authority, or shall destroy or remove any fence, railing, inclosure, or other mark for the protection or ornamentation of said park, or any portion thereof, or shall destroy, cut, hack, bark, break down, or otherwise injure any tree, brush, or shrubbery that may be growing upon said park, or shall cut down or remove or fell any timber, battle relic, tree, or tree growing upon said park, or hunt within the limits of the park, any person so offending and found guilty thereof before any justice of the peace of the County of Pender, State of North Carolina, shall, for each and every offense, forfeit and pay a fine, in the discretion of the justice, according to the aggravation of the offense, of not less than \$5 nor more than \$50, one half for the use of the park and the other half to the informer, to be enforced and recovered before such

justice in like manner as fines of like nature are now by law recoverable in the said County of Pender, State of North Carolina.

An Act To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to accept property for the Moores Creek National Military Park, and for other purposes, approved September 27, 1944 (58 Stat. 746)

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,
That the Secretary of the Interior is hereby authorized, in his discretion, to accept in behalf of the United States donations of lands, buildings, structures, and other property, or interests therein, which he may determine to be of historical interest in connection with the Moores Creek National Military Park, the title to such property or interests to be satisfactory to the Secretary of the Interior: *Provided*, That the area to be accepted pursuant to this Act shall not exceed one hundred acres. All such property and interests, upon acquisition by the Federal Government, shall be a part of the Moores Creek National Military Park and shall be subject to all laws and regulations applicable thereto.

An Act To provide for increases in appropriation ceilings and boundary changes in certain units of the National Park System, to authorize appropriations for additional costs of land acquisition for the National Park System, and for other purposes, approved October 26, 1974 (88 Stat. 1445) (Public Law 93-477)

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SEC. 101. The limitations on appropriations for the acquisition of lands and interests therein within units of the National Park System contained in the following Acts are amended as follows:

(7) Moores Creek National Military Park, North Carolina: The Act of September 27, 1944 (58 Stat. 746) is amended by adding the following new section:

“SEC. 2. There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this Act, but not more than \$243,000 shall be appropriated for the acquisition of lands and interests in lands and not more than \$325,000 shall be appropriated for development.”

SEC. 402. The Act of September 27, 1944 (58 Stat. 746), providing for the Moores Creek National Military Park is amended by changing the words “accept in behalf of the United States donations of” to “acquire by donation, purchase, or exchange”, and by changing “to be accepted” to “acquired”.

An Act To improve the administration of the Historic Sites, Buildings and Antiquities Act of 1935 (49 Stat. 666), approved September 8, 1980 (94 Stat. 1133) (Public Law 96-344)

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SEC. 12. The area formerly known as “Moores Creek National Military Park”, established pursuant to the Act of June 2, 1926 (44 Stat. 684), shall henceforth be known as the “Moores Creek National Battlefield”.

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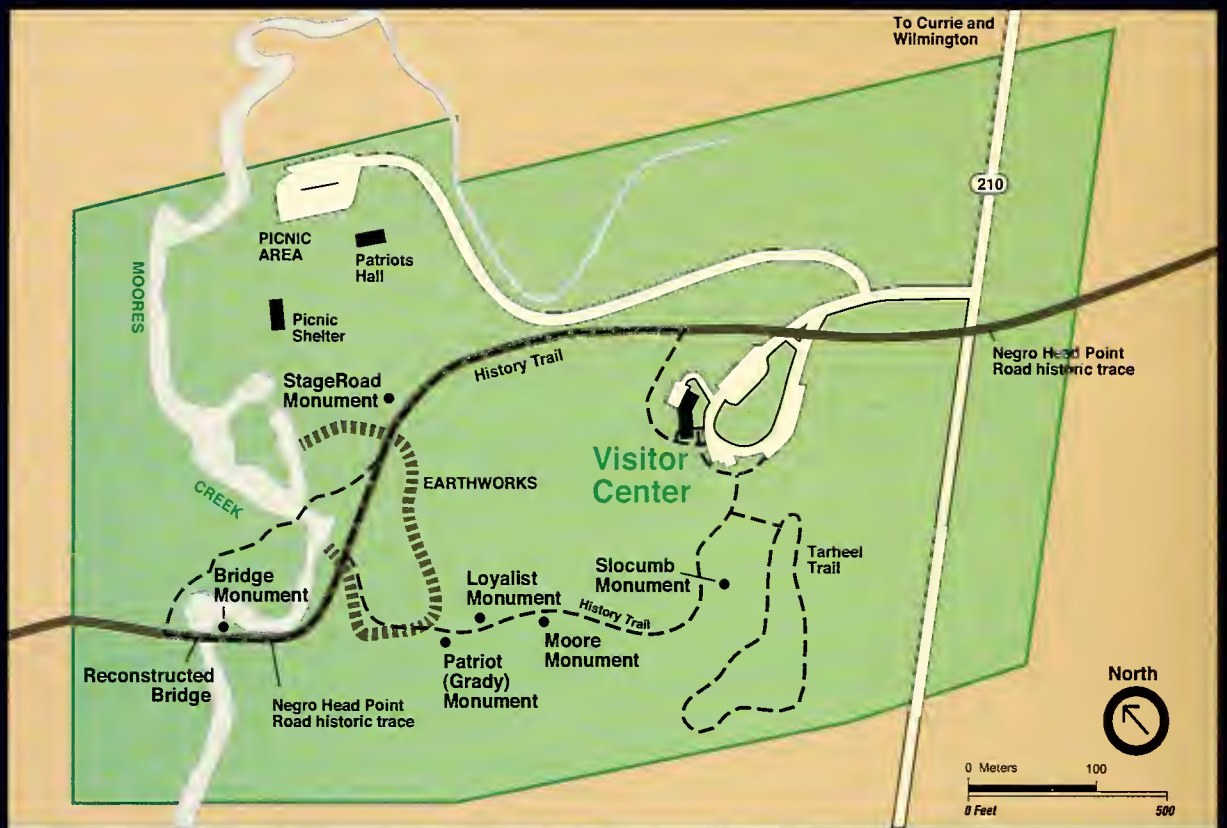
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